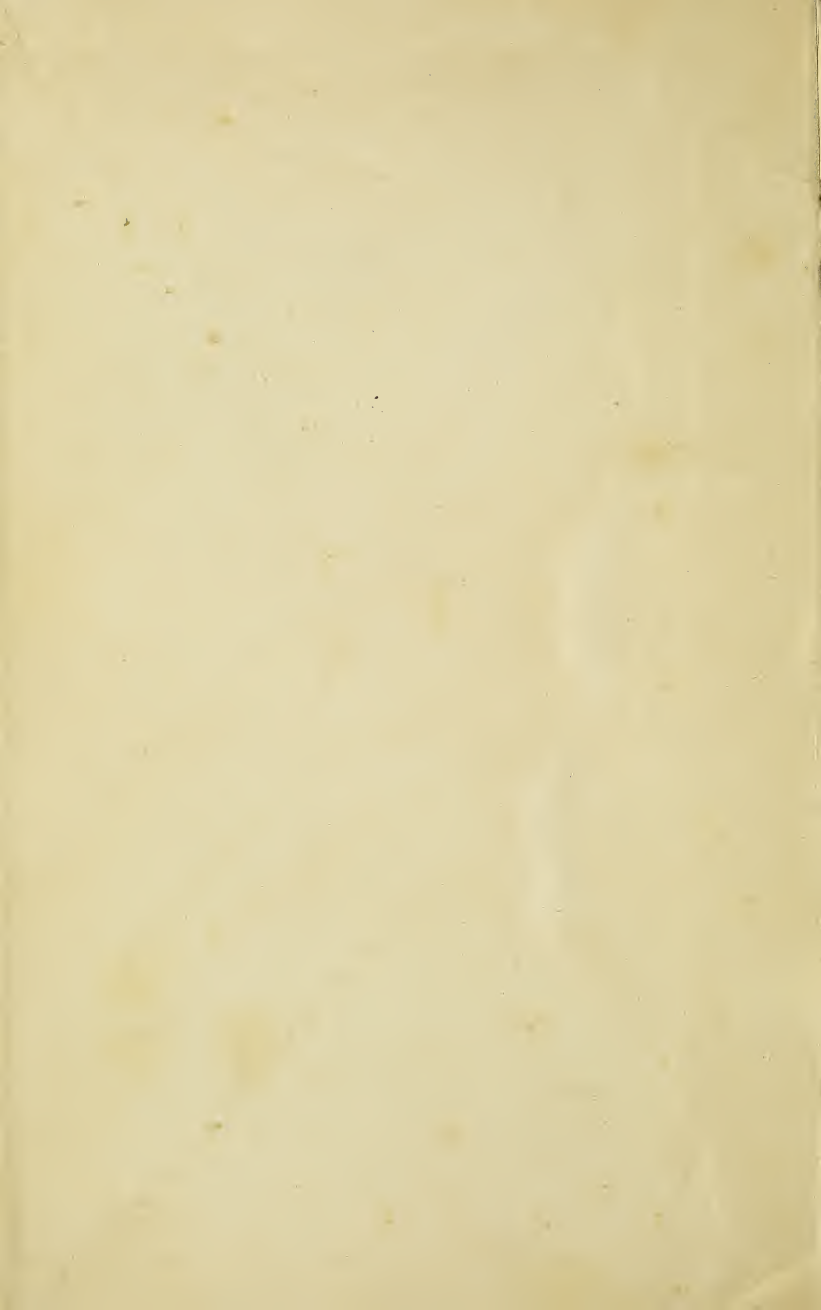


RIVERS OF WATER

IN A DRY PLACE





ROBERT MOFFAT.

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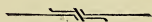
RIVERS OF WATER

IN A

DRY PLACE

OR

*FROM AFRICANER'S KRAAL
TO KHAMA'S CITY*



LONDON
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY
56 PATERNOSTER ROW, 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD
AND 164 PICCADILLY.



PREFATORY NOTE.



THE Religious Tract Society had for many years upon its list a book entitled *Rivers of Water in a Dry Place*. It found a very large circle of readers, and after doing good service for many years, it passed out of print. Dr. Moffat has passed away, and can be known to the present generation only through his own writings and through the records of noble missionary toil and self-sacrifice. The story of his wonderful career is one of perennial charm and profit. Hence, under the old title, the Committee have had this new edition of the old book prepared. Some of the early chapters have been omitted, new chapters at the end tell the last thirty years of the inspiring story, and the whole has been carefully revised. It is hoped that through its perusal the children of to-day may learn, like their fathers and mothers, to love and reverence the great missionary hero of South Africa, and be induced to work and to pray for the conversion and freedom of the Dark Continent.

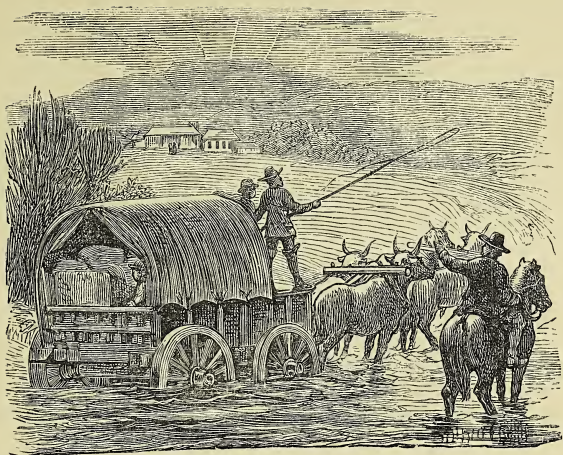


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RIVERS OF WATER IN A DRY PLACE.

CHAPTER I.

AFRICANER.

IN the year 1817, there was a young man in England, who had made up his mind to leave this country and go to Africa. He had been taught gardening, but he did not want to go to Africa to train plants, nor even to dig for diamonds or gold, as many people do. He had made up his mind to go there to spend his life as a missionary among the people.

We call a man or a woman a missionary, if they go to people who know nothing about Jesus Christ, or do not love Him, and try to teach them what a wonderful and

loving Saviour He is. A good missionary needs a great deal of love to Jesus in his heart, or else he would not care to talk to other people about Him; and he needs to be very brave too, besides a great many other things.

This young man did love Jesus well, and he was very brave, as you shall hear. His name was Robert Moffat, and the part of the country to which he was going was the south of Africa.

Let us go on to Africa a little before Robert Moffat, and get ready to welcome him there when he arrives.

The colony of the Cape of Good Hope is at the south of Africa, and it belongs to England now. But before Cape Colony was given up to the English, it had belonged to the Dutch, and the Dutch farmers, who settled in the country, were called Boers. In this story you will often hear of the Boers, or Dutch farmers.

There are other people in the south of Africa, and they were there before either the Dutch or the English,—black people, naked, dirty, and ignorant; and, sad to say, when the white conquerors came, they did not use these poor people well. They drove the blacks off the land, or took them for slaves, instead of teaching them what was right and good.

Some Christian white men, however, who really loved Jesus, and felt that Jesus would wish these poor heathen to be taught to know and love Him, went out to Africa and became missionaries to the black people.

Among these black people was a man named Africaner. He was a chief. The Dutch farmers had driven him and his brother Titus, and their tribe, away from their native hills. They had taken away their cattle, and one thing after another that belonged to them, and at last had made them slaves to a Boer.

For a long time Africaner and his men served their

master well. They looked after the cattle, and protected their master's property from thieves and robbers and wild beasts, so that the farmer grew rich and prosperous.

The Boer, however, did not treat them kindly in return for their work and care, and at last the hearts of Africaner and his brother Titus rebelled against the injustice done to them. They were chiefs, and had not been used to being servants, much less slaves; and they were men, and, though they knew little, they felt like men, and thought like men.

The master became more and more unkind, and at last Africaner and his people refused to do something he had ordered. This disobedience made the farmer very angry. It was evening, but he sent a messenger to tell them to come to him at once. Wondering much what their master would do to them, they went up to his house; but Titus, who was a very fierce man, carried a gun behind him. In the gathering twilight it was not easy to see the gun.

When they reached the house, Africaner walked up the steps to his master to explain why they had refused to obey him. But in a moment, without waiting to hear a single word, the farmer rushed upon his black servant, and, with one blow, knocked him down to the bottom of the steps again.

Angry Titus, when he saw his brother so quickly pushed down, as quickly raised his gun and shot the Boer dead. Nor was this all. Africaner, Titus, and their men rushed into the house, and made the farmer's wife give them all the guns, and powder, and shot which had belonged to her husband. Poor frightened woman! with her husband lying dead outside, and no one to help her, what could she do against these wild men? She quickly showed them where to find the things they

wished to have; and when they had taken all they wanted, they left the house. But, before they went, they told her she too should be killed, if she gave any alarm, or went to any one for help before the morning.

This gave Africaner time to collect all his people, and set off towards the Orange river. The Orange river was at that time the boundary of the land which belonged to the English, and Africaner wanted to get beyond the English lands and be free. They started in great haste; for Africaner knew that as soon as the Boers in the country round heard what had happened, they would pursue him, to punish him for his master's death.

As Africaner and his band went on their way, they were joined by many other ill-used, desperate men. And his party grew so strong, that when the Boers followed to fight them, they were afraid, and dared not attack them openly.

The governor of Cape Colony soon heard of all this. He pronounced Africaner to be an outlaw, and promised one thousand dollars to any one who would bring his head to the Cape. But no one ever managed to cut his head off. He was away on the other side of the Orange river now, and was not likely to cross it again.

Although Africaner was not killed, there was a great deal of blood shed over this affair. The Boers bribed some of the tribes near to go to war with Africaner; and this war was carried on for many years. Africaner and Titus killed every one who had the misfortune to fall into their hands; and many were the crimes they committed, and the wars in which they took part. Every one was afraid of these desperate men and their band,—they were feared more even than the lions and other savage beasts which roamed about the wilderness.

The missionaries who undertook to go near such a

tribe as Africaner's must indeed have been brave men; but some Christian men were found courageous enough even for this. They did not venture quite to Africaner's kraal, or village, but two brothers, named Christian and Abraham Albrecht, went to Africa on purpose to settle near them.

It was a difficult and dangerous journey these missionaries had to take. They had to travel in a clumsy, rough waggon, drawn by as many as twelve or fourteen oxen. They had to go over land in which at that time there were no roads: sometimes they jolted and bumped over stony hills; sometimes they waded through mud, or shallow rivers; and sometimes they crept slowly and wearily over mile upon mile of deep, hot, soft sand, into which the oxen's feet and the waggon wheels sunk, and in which they even sometimes stuck. It was not a pleasant journey, and the end did not seem likely to be pleasant either.

There were no inns at which, when night came, they could stop and rest, and feed the oxen and themselves. They had to do what is called 'outspan' in the desert. They unharnessed the oxen, gathered wood for a fire, if any could be found, collected the tired animals together as near as possible; and the drivers would lie down by the fire, while the missionaries would sleep in the waggon.

The fire was to keep the wild beasts, especially the lions, away, for they could often be heard prowling about; and sometimes a cow, or even a man, might be carried off.

Unfortunately, when Christian and Abraham came to the sandy desert, the oxen did not prove strong enough to drag the waggon through the hot, deep sand. One and another dropped down fainting by the way, and

Rivers of Water in a Dry Place

there was no water to refresh and revive them, and no shelter from the glaring sunshine to which they could crawl and rest. And so, as they fell, they were left behind to die, and to be eaten up by lions when the night came; while the travellers pressed on with such oxen as could still walk, lest they too should faint and fall, and become a prey to the savage beasts, before the fearful desert was passed.

The bread and water, which Christian and Abraham had carried in the waggon with them, proved to be not enough for their long journey, and many times did they almost despair of reaching the Orange river alive. Yet God kept them from death, and from giving up in despair. He had a great work to be done, and they were being guided, through sore troubles, to do the work.

At length, after many wanderings, Christian and Abraham Albrecht settled at a place called Warm Bath, where they hoped to be safe from Africaner, who was living about one hundred miles away from them.

Before going to Warm Bath, however, they had stopped, for a short time, much nearer to Africaner's kraal; and the great robber had visited them, and had even sent his children to be taught by them. Once when he came to see the missionaries he said, 'You are sent by the English people; that is why I like you to be in my country. I hate the Dutch, they ill-treated me; but I love the English, they are the friends of the poor black man.'

In spite of these kind words, the missionaries did not feel quite safe so near to Africaner, and that was one reason why they moved to Warm Bath.

At last a time came when Africaner was very angry with the missionaries. This was how it happened. Africaner had a quarrel with another chief, and there was

fighting between them. The Warm Bath people joined Africaner's enemy ; and this made Africaner very angry indeed, not only with the people, but with their teachers ; for he believed that they had persuaded the people of Warm Bath to fight against him. In his anger he vowed he would destroy and burn the mission station, kill the missionaries and every living thing near.

This was very alarming indeed. Abraham Albrecht was already in heaven, safe from the murderer. But there were at the station Abraham's wife and little child, Christian and his wife, and another missionary who had joined them.

How could they escape ? They were two hundred miles away from any white men who could help them. There were no caves in which they could take refuge ; there was no safe nook between high rocks where they might hide. The huts in which they lived would not protect them from Africaner, and for miles around there was nothing but a hot, dry, sandy plain.

Africaner and his army were coming nearer and nearer. They heard it from the terrified people who went past Warm Bath as they fled before him. ' Soon, very soon,' these fugitives said, ' Africaner will be at Warm Bath.' What could the missionaries do ? They dug holes in the sandy ground, deep, square holes, in which they could stand upright without their heads showing above the ground, so that if bullet-shots came whizzing overhead, they would not be touched. These holes would not be so easily found as huts standing on the ground ; and over them they spread tarpaulins, to keep off a little the hot rays of the sun. There, in those pits, the whole of the missionary party lived for a week ; nearly suffocated by the heat and want of air, and expecting every day that Africaner would come.

At the end of a week, a kind black chief, who had heard of their distress, came to them, and helped them all to move away to another place, where they would be quite safe. Africaner and his men arrived just too late to find any one left to kill. The natives had all run away long ago, and now the white men too were gone. He and his plundering band were obliged to content themselves with searching for the things the missionaries had left behind in their hasty flight; and they soon found that a great many things had been buried in the sand. This delighted them. Quickly they scratched away the sand, and dug out whatever they found, and then sat down to examine and enjoy the strange things which white people used.

One of Africaner's slaves, as he wandered about, went into a little piece of ground which the missionaries had enclosed. Here Abraham had been buried. The man stepped on a mound of earth, which seemed to be a grave; but what was his surprise to hear soft notes of music coming up from under the sand! Full of wonder, he stood still to listen,—the music had stopped. He found courage once more to step on the same place as before, and there, once more, were the sweet, soft sounds from underneath. What could it be? He had heard the teachers say that the dead people would rise again. Were they rising now?

Without waiting another moment, or daring to look behind him, away he darted, as though a ghost were after him, and came panting with fright to Africaner, to tell him there was something alive, which was making music in the grave.

Africaner was afraid of nothing; he went to the burial ground, followed by his men. He jumped upon the mound, and heard the strange sounds; and then his

men, taking courage from their chief, first one and then another jumped after him, while each leap awoke those strange, soft notes underground.

What could it be? Africaner did not believe in the dead rising. He ordered his servants to dig down, and find out what it was. A hole was quickly scratched in the loose, dry sand; and such a thing was uncovered as those savage men had never seen before.

It was a piano, which had been given to Mrs. Albrecht; and which she was hoping to find safe, if ever she came again to Warm Bath.

Africaner pulled the piano to pieces, hoping in that way to find out how music came from it; and, of course, that made an end to both the piano and the music.





CHAPTER II.

AFRICANER'S KRAAL.

AFTER what you have heard of Africaner, you will be surprised to learn that Robert Moffat was going to live with Africaner,—to live in his kraal, or village ; not a hundred miles off, as Christian and Abraham Albrecht had done. But a wonderful thing had happened. Africaner had become a changed, a converted man. He had turned quite round from his wicked ways. He had gone to the missionaries, and had listened to what they told him about Jesus and His love. Christ's love had melted his hard heart, and had made him sorry for his sins. Africaner was learning to be meek and gentle like Jesus Himself. The lion was growing like a lamb.

When this great change came to Africaner, he wanted a missionary to come to his kraal and teach him, and his people, and their children ; and Robert Moffat consented to go to him.

He went in a ship to the Cape of Good Hope ; there he got a waggon, and oxen, and drivers, and set off on his journey across the country to Africaner's kraal.

As he travelled, now and again he came to a farm, and stopped a little while. The Boer who kept the farm was pleased to see him ; but when Mr. Moffat said that he

was on his way to Africaner, and intended to live with him, every one wondered how he could be so foolish. No one had a good word to say for the chief; they thought Africaner was a robber and murderer still. No one would believe that he was a changed and Christian man.

‘No,’ said one farmer, ‘it cannot be true. He will certainly fix you up for a target, and set his boys to shoot at you.’

‘Going to him!’ exclaimed another. ‘He will strip off your skin while you are alive, make a drum of it, and dance to the music.’

‘Don’t venture,’ said a third. ‘He will kill you, and make a drinking-cup of your skull.’

To hear such things said would be more than enough to frighten a coward; and it was quite true that Africaner had done these dreadful things in times past. But Mr. Moffat was a brave man, and a true Christian; he neither turned aside nor went back. He believed what Mr. Albrecht had written about the wonderful change in Africaner; for he knew that God has the power to make a bad heart soft and good.

After a toilsome journey with his waggon, and oxen, and drivers, the young missionary at last reached Africaner’s kraal. As soon as the waggon arrived, Africaner went to pay Mr. Moffat a visit. ‘Are you the teacher,’ he asked, ‘who was promised to me and my people?’ Mr. Moffat told him he was. Africaner appeared very glad to hear this, and said that, as Mr. Moffat was a young man, he hoped he might live many years to teach the people of the kraal.

The chief did not set him up as a mark for arrows, nor strip off his skin, nor cut off his head, but he did something else. As soon as the first meeting was over, and Africaner knew that Mr. Moffat meant to remain

with him, he called for a number of women. This surprised Mr. Moffat, who wondered for what the women could be wanted. Presently the women came, carrying on their heads bundles of mats and long sticks. Africaner pointed to a piece of ground, and said,—

‘There you are to build a house for our teacher, Moffat.’

The women did not seem at all unwilling to do as they were ordered. They fixed the long sticks upright in the ground in a circle, and tied them all together at the top, so as to form a beehive-shaped hut. This framework was covered with native mats, and in half an hour the missionary’s house was finished.

In this house he lived for six months, before he could get one better, and found it not very weather-proof, nor very comfortable. When the sun shone, its rays beat down upon the little hut, so as to make the heat more than he could bear. When the wind blew, it was filled with dust, which came in through the spaces between the poles. If it rained outside the hut, it seemed to rain inside also. It was certainly far from comfortable.

And not only did heat, and dust, and rain visit the missionary’s home without being wanted. Sometimes a savage dog would force his way through the openings in the wall. Sometimes a serpent would creep in, and coil himself up among Mr. Moffat’s things. And once two bulls had a fight together so very near, that it was with difficulty the missionary prevented them from crushing the hut altogether. Still this crazy concern was as good as the huts in which Africaner and the other villagers lived. They had all been built by the women in the same hasty way.

Mr. Moffat’s food was not better than his house. He had no bread. The country was so miserable, and dry from want of water, that no corn would grow. There

was nothing to eat except the flesh of the wild animals, or of oxen, which might be killed, and there was only milk to drink.

Meat and milk, meat and milk, meat and milk, day after day. Both good things, you say. Yes. But how would you like them always? and how would they agree with you if you had nothing else for food?

All that had been said about Africaner proved to be true; and Mr. Moffat never had to find fault with him. Instead of making the gun his companion, it was his Bible he loved to have with him now. Often Mr. Moffat saw him sitting in the shadow of some of the great granite rocks which were about his kraal, reading his Bible. Sometimes, too, those granite rocks echoed back sounds they had never heard before; Robert Moffat would go out in the stillness of the evening, and sing hymns to tunes he played on his violin. His thoughts would go home then to what his mother loved, and he would sing a hymn she taught him—

Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise.
He justly claims a song from thee,
His loving kindness, oh, how free!

At heart Mr. Moffat was happy and thankful, in spite of his loneliness and his uncomfortable home.

Often, too, in the evening, when the work of the day was done, Mr. Moffat and Africaner would sit and talk together under the shelter of those bare rocks. Mr. Moffat would look at his companion's face then with wonder, it looked so gentle. One day Mr. Moffat said to him,—

‘Africaner, I am trying to picture you going about the country killing and destroying. I cannot think how eyes like yours could smile at the misery you caused.’

Africaner wept bitter tears now as he remembered all

he had done ; he could not bear the thought of it. His love of war was gone, and now he did all he could to prevent people from quarrelling and fighting.

Mr. Moffat began to teach the children of the kraal, and, with Africaner's help, he soon had as many as one hundred and twenty young people in the school. Dirtier than the dirtiest of our ragged children were these little savages, and missionary and chief together took them to the fountain to teach them how to wash themselves, and to many of them Mr. Moffat gave a good scrubbing with his own hands. Remember the children had not been washed since they were born, and then imagine, if you can, what the work of washing them was like.

When the children's bodies had been made clean, there were all the skin blankets, or karosses, to wash also. These skins are not so easily cleaned as our clothes in England, and they had been washed just as often, and no oftener, than their young owners. When once the children and their blankets were made clean, the young people did confess that they felt more comfortable, and they were never allowed to get so dirty again.

Africaner soon found out that Mr. Moffat had sometimes very little food, and sent him a present of two cows, that he might have milk when he could get nothing else. The milk of two cows will seem to you a great quantity for one man to drink. It would be in England, but in that part of Africa, where the pasture was poor, and there was very little water, the cows did not give much milk.

Mr. Moffat's milk and meat diet did not agree with him, and he became very ill. Then Africaner came to the hut, and nursed him most kindly and attentively, and was filled with joy when he saw his good teacher recovering, for he was afraid of losing him.

Two of Africaner's brothers were Christians, as well as himself, but Titus had not given up his heathen ways, although in some things he was very much improved.

He used to say to Mr. Moffat, 'I hear you, and sometimes I think I understand, but my heart will not feel.'

Titus was the only person in the kraal who had more than one wife,—he had two; and these two wives of his quarrelled so dreadfully, that often he almost made up his mind to give some presents to one of them, and send her home to her father.

One morning Titus came to Mr. Moffat's hut, leading an ox, and on the ox was seated one of his wives. Mr. Moffat thought to himself, 'Surely she is at last going to be sent to her father's home.' But he was mistaken.

'What is the matter?' he asked.

Titus held out his hand to shake Mr. Moffat's, and answered, laughing, 'Just the old thing over again.'

His wives had been quarrelling as usual, and one, in her rage, had thrown a piece of stick at the other; this stick had gone into the other woman's hand, and had broken off there. Titus could not get it out for her, and had brought her to Mr. Moffat. The woman's hand was badly swollen, and the missionary was obliged to cut it to get the wood out. Even this accident did not make Titus send away either of his wives.





CHAPTER III.

MR. MOFFAT AND AFRICANER SEEK A NEW HOME.

THE country round Africaner's kraal was very bare and dry, very sandy and desolate. There were no trees to make the landscape pretty, there was very little water for the people to drink; and it was very difficult indeed to get grass and corn, or fruit and vegetables to grow, because of the want of water. In spite of this, more and more people came to live at the kraal, in order to be near Africaner and his teacher. And the more people came, the less food and water there was to divide between them, so that sometimes they were starving.

When Mr. Moffat saw how difficult it was for the people to live, he proposed to Africaner that he should come with him, and travel about the country, to see whether they could not find some land nearer to a river, and with more fertile soil, to which they might all remove.

Africaner willingly agreed to go with Mr. Moffat; and very soon preparations for the journey were being made at the kraal. The waggon in which Mr. Moffat had travelled when he came to Africaner was broken; that had to be mended. Iron bands were needed to make the wheels strong and safe; they had come off, and there

was no blacksmith to put them on again. It was no use waiting for some one to do the work; Mr. Moffat had to turn blacksmith himself.

He tried, and at last made a large pair of bellows out of two goatskins and some wood. In some parts of Africa native bellows are made out of goatskins, and the people manage to get the skins off the goats without making any opening in them, except just at the neck. You will know how the bellows were used if you have ever looked in at a forge, where a blacksmith has been making horseshoes ready to put on the horses' feet. Much in the same way Mr. Moffat heated and hammered his iron and fastened it round his waggon wheels.

The people crowded round to watch the strange doings of their teacher; they had never seen anything like it. Mr. Moffat was very nervous; it was his first attempt at such work, and he did not know how he should succeed. Succeed! No one fails to succeed who sets to work with thought, care, patience, and perseverance. To his own surprise, and to the delight of the black men, who capered and danced round the forge and the waggon, Mr. Moffat found he could be his own blacksmith. He had made his rough old waggon fit for use again, and had not even burnt so much as a finger in doing it. He was so well pleased with his success that he next tried his hand upon some guns, and mended them also.

And now, with twelve oxen once more yoked into the waggon, with the guns fit for use, and with thirty men as a guard, in case they should be attacked, Mr. Moffat, Africaner, and Titus started towards the north; for in that direction they had heard there was plenty of water.

You will be surprised, perhaps, that they did not all

move to the beautiful Orange river, which flowed not so very far away on the south. Other missionaries were living there, so that Mr. Moffat thought it his duty to go elsewhere; besides, the land to the south belonged to other chiefs, who would not like Africaner to come among them.

The waggon and oxen and men passed slowly on, often over plains of sand where no green thing grew but low bushes, and where there was nothing to vary the flatness except little sand-hills. In other parts there were many wild animals roaming about: striped zebras and swift wild asses, tall giraffes and graceful antelopes, huge rhinoceroses and hungry lions.

Some of these animals were shot for food, and if a large one was killed, the oxen had a day's rest while the dead game was being cut up into thin strips, and hung on the low bushes to dry in the sun. The best parts of the meat were eaten at once, and the remainder, when dry, was stowed away in the waggon, to be eaten when nothing better was to be obtained. This dried meat was very tough indeed; as tough, Mr. Moffat says, as the sole of a boot. When the men used it for food, it was first cooked under some hot ashes, and then beaten between two stones to make it a little easier to chew. But even then their jaws ached terribly by the time their meal was finished.

One day, as they were slowly toiling over the burning sands, they saw some hills in the distance, with an opening between them which looked quite green and pleasant. The oxen's heads were soon turned towards this pleasant-looking glen. But when the travellers reached it, they found the plants growing there were so thick and close together that it was very difficult to move on at all.

As the day was extremely hot, and the men and oxen weary, they all rested in the refreshing shade for a while. Afterwards, as some of the men wandered about, they found a number of wild bees in the clefts of the rocks on the hill-sides, and stores of honey which they had made. The honey was a delicious treat, and every one enjoyed it, as for many days there had been very little to eat except the tough dried meat.

How nice it was! How pleasant was the sweetness! But presently one man complained that his throat was getting very hot. Then another and another said the same thing; until by and by they all felt quite ill, and as though their throats and stomachs were on fire.

Some one who lived near happened to pass along just then, and he noticed that the men had honey smeared on their faces.

‘You had better not eat the honey in this valley,’ he said to them. ‘Do you not see the poisonous bushes? The bees make their honey poisonous when they gather it from these flowers.’

Yes, the pleasant-looking green bushes were poisonous. How they must have wished that this stranger had come to warn them a little sooner! It was too late now; they had eaten the honey, and were feeling every minute more and more ill. The little water that they had with them in the waggon was soon drunk up, but it made them feel no better, the burning heat in their throats and stomachs still went on. Happily no one died from this poisoning. For several days they all suffered dreadful pain from it; but gradually they got better, and before long were quite well again.

All day long the patient oxen had drawn the waggon over a sandy plain, with the burning sun beating down upon them. The men, too, had toiled on in the heat,

without having had a drop of water; and when the night came they were all obliged to lie down, without having found a pool at which they could quench their raging thirst. Mr. Moffat arose very early in the morning,—he was too thirsty to sleep,—and, leaving the rest of the party to follow with the waggon, he went forward with one man to try and find water. After passing some hills, and walking a long, weary way over the plain, they saw in the distance smoke curling upwards from among the bushes.

That smoke was a most welcome sight! Where there was smoke there must be fire. Where there was fire, there must be some one to light it. Where there was some one living to light a fire, surely there must be water. Perhaps there was even a kraal there, built near some pleasant pool.

Mr. Moffat and his companion hastened on their way; they hoped very soon now to have water to drink. As they came near the bushes, they were startled to see, by the footprints in the sand, that lions had been there a very short time before. Their guns were lying far behind in the waggon; they felt almost afraid to venture farther. But there, in front, was the peaceful smoke still rising; and without water they must die.

They ventured to go on, and the smoke was reached in safety. No village was near, not even a hut or a man. But, crouching down on the ground, by the fire, whose smoke had been seen so far off, was an old woman,—a woman so old, and so very, very thin and weak, that when she saw the strangers coming, she tried in vain to rise. She was very much frightened too, when she saw Mr. Moffat with his strange dress and white face. He spoke kindly to her in her own language, and said,—

‘My mother, don’t be afraid! we are friends. We will do you no harm.’

For a while the poor creature seemed too much afraid to speak. Mr. Moffat talked gently to her for some time, and tried to show her, by his behaviour, that there was no cause for fear. When she was quieter, and trembled less, he asked her who she was, and how she came to be in so desolate a place alone, with no one to be kind or attentive to her.

‘I am a woman,’ she told him. ‘I have been here four days; my children have left me here to die.’

‘Your children!’ exclaimed Mr. Moffat.

‘Yes,’ she said; ‘my own children,—my three sons and my two daughters. They have gone away to yonder blue mountain, and have left me here to die.’

‘And why did they leave you?’ asked Mr. Moffat.

She spread out her bony hands, and answered, ‘I am old, you see, and cannot be of any use to them. When they kill game, I cannot carry the flesh home for them. I cannot gather the wood for their fires. I cannot carry their babies on my back. They do not want me any more.’

Mr. Moffat wept as he gazed at this deserted mother, and listened to what she told him.

He asked her, ‘Are you not afraid of the lions? I wonder they have not eaten you up; they have been quite close to you.’

‘I am so thin,’ she replied; ‘there is nothing on my bones for the lions to eat.’

Just then the waggon came in sight, and the poor old woman was very much alarmed. She thought it was some dreadful wild beast, worse than all the lions.

Mr. Moffat told her it was not alive, and could do her no harm, and said he would put her into the waggon and

take care of her, as he did not like to leave her there.

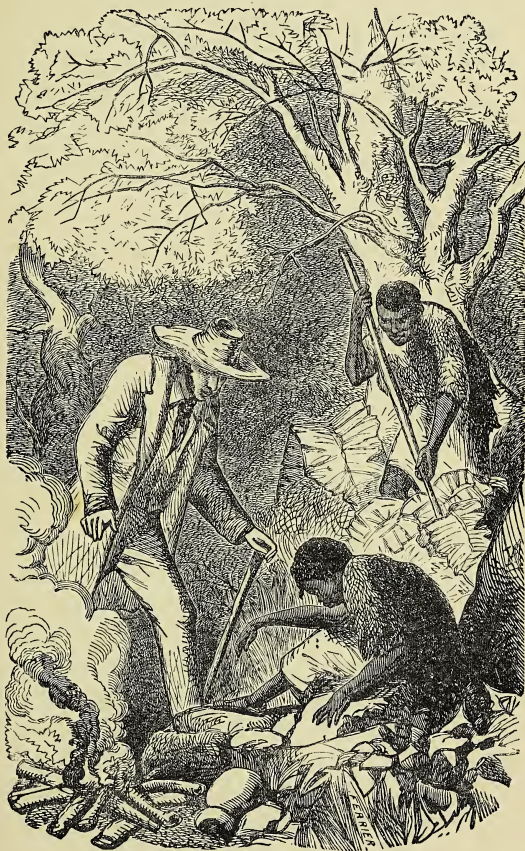
When she heard he meant to put her into the waggon, she became so terrified that Mr. Moffat did not know what to do; he was afraid she would die of fright. It was evident they could not take her away in the waggon, it was as evident that he could not stay with her, for already he and his companions were growing delirious from want of water.

They collected wood to make up her fire; they gave her some dried meat, some tobacco, a knife, and a few other things. Then telling her to keep a good fire, lest the lions should steal her meat, they went away again to look for water.

On his way back from this journey, Mr. Moffat looked for the old woman. She was nowhere to be seen. Months afterwards, he heard that the woman's sons had noticed his waggon, and had gone to see what the people in the waggon had done to their mother. When she told them of the white man, and showed them the food he had given her, they fancied Mr. Moffat must be a great chief, who would come and punish them for treating their mother so cruelly. Therefore they carried her home again, and took care of her for the rest of her life.

Is not this a sad story? How differently you treat your mother! Your willing feet run to fetch whatever she wants, her work-basket, or footstool, or book. Your loving arms often encircle her neck, while your soft lips kiss hers, and you whisper, through kisses, your thanks and love for all her care. And by and by you will be grown up, and your mother will be growing old. How you will love her then! Her seat will be the warmest and most comfortable, in the pleasantest corner of the

room ; and you will do your best to make her happy, just as she made you happy and cared for you when you were a child. Will it not be so ?



THE AGED WOMAN SAVED FROM DEATH.

The knowledge of God has made this great difference between us and the heathen. In God's Word, as you

know, it is written: 'Honour thy father and thy mother.' 'Despise not thy mother when she is old.'

Soon after leaving this despised old mother, Mr. Moffat and his men reached some water. It was so thick and muddy that it would hardly go down their throats, yet they were very glad to drink it, and it did them good.

At length the Fish river, the end of their journey, was in sight. How pleasant after the thirsty wilderness! Would they find a spot here to which they might remove with their wives and children? No. Here the natives stopped the waggon, and would not allow it to go along the river. They had heard of Africaner, and of the missionary. They believed that 'hat-men,' as they called white men, were all bad together, and when they found that the dreadful Africaner and his 'hat-man' wanted to come and live near them, they were quite determined to prevent it, if possible.

No doubt Africaner might have conquered these people, as he had conquered others; but he did not wish to fight. So changed a man was he, that he did not even get angry. The oxen were allowed a few days' rest in the green pastures by the river, and then once more they were yoked into the waggon, and their heads were turned towards the dreary wilderness again.

The travellers reached Africaner's kraal in safety at the end of this unsuccessful journey, and found things there looking more parched-up and desolate than ever.

Many of the men were obliged to go a long way off with their cattle, before they could find sufficient grass for them. They did not often come to the kraal—how could Mr. Moffat teach them? He resolved not to stop always at the kraal, but to go round about the country teaching, and talking about Jesus, wherever he could find any one to listen.

Titus had learned to love his kind friend the missionary very much, and when he knew that Mr. Moffat was going to ride about from place to place among the cattle stations, on the back of an ox, he did a very generous thing. He brought his own horse, his only one, which he used in hunting, and begged his teacher to use it; and this Mr. Moffat did gladly.

So the missionary started on Titus's horse. His Bible and hymn-book were tied up in a rug which was fastened to the back of the saddle. Both he and the man who acted as guide and interpreter had a gun, but they carried nothing else, except a little tobacco and a tinder-box. They took no provisions, as they were going among the villages, and expected to get food at the first they reached.

After a hot day's ride, Mr. Moffat and his man would sometimes reach a kraal. The women would bring the visitors a draught of fresh, sweet milk just drawn from the cow. Then all the people, men, women, and children, would come round and listen, while Mr. Moffat read them some story about Jesus from his Bible, and sang a hymn to them, and tried to teach them their duty to each other, and to the great God who had made them. Afterwards he would have some more milk, and lie down on a mat to sleep. Sometimes a kind woman would set up a forked stick near his head, and hang upon it a wooden pot full of milk, that he might find something to drink, should he be thirsty in the night.

At one kraal, Mr. Moffat slept on the ground, near the door of the principal man's hut. In the night he heard some animal moving about, just on the other side of the thorny fence, close to which he was lying. When morning came, he asked the chief if some of the cattle had broken loose, and come near the hut.

‘Oh no,’ was the answer, ‘it was not the cattle;—I have been looking at the marks on the ground;—it was the lion again. A few nights ago he jumped over the fence, and ate up a goat just where you were sleeping.’

Is it not wonderful that the lion had not jumped over again that night? Surely God’s eye, which never slumbers, had watched on both sides of the hedge. Mr. Moffat felt that it was only God who could have preserved him from the lion, and thanked Him for His care; as he did many other times when his Heavenly Father saved him from danger or death.





CHAPTER IV.

ANOTHER JOURNEY.

MR MOFFAT and Africaner did not grow more satisfied with their desert home as time went on, and as a part of the country belonging to the Griquas was offered to Africaner, he asked the missionary to go and see it. There was another missionary living at Griqua Town, named Mr. Andersen, and as neither he nor Mr. Moffat often saw countrymen of their own, no doubt they were glad to see each other, and have a talk together.

Africaner did not go with Mr. Moffat this time, but he sent his two brothers, David and Simon, and his son Yonker, together with a guide, called Yantye.

The travellers started on horses, with their guns, and some karosses in which to wrap themselves at night. Several of the horses failed on the way, and they had to be left behind with their burdens, including some of the karosses.

Late one night, the travellers came suddenly close to a steep bank. It was dark, and far down below they heard the murmuring of the Orange river. No one ventured to go on, lest he should tumble in among the hippopotami who played in the river; and so they all made up their minds to remain where they were for the night.

No fire was kindled, for fear it should be seen by

Bushmen, who might be their enemies; and there were not karosses enough left for each man to have one to sleep under. In this difficulty, Mr. Moffat thought of a very strange bed. He dug a hole in the sand, into which he put himself, leaving out only his head. Here he was soon so comfortable that he called to his companions to follow his example. One of them did so, and when they were both snugly buried in their holes, Mr. Moffat told him a story of another missionary who had done the same thing once, when he and his dog had been overtaken by night, and could find no shelter. Large land crabs had tried to get at the missionary's uncovered head, and the faithful dog had stayed awake, and kept the crabs off, while his master slept.

'There are no crabs here,' said the other man; 'but there are lions. What shall we do if the lions come?'

'Oh,' answered Mr. Moffat, 'you and I need not be afraid of the lions to-night. They will not touch our heads when they can get whole bodies so easily!'

And so the weary men closed their eyes, and slept safely and peacefully in their strange sand beds.

The scenery on the Orange river was quite delightful after the bare country in which Mr. Moffat had been living.

Sometimes, deep down between high precipices, ran the river; sometimes it spread itself out like a beautiful, tranquil lake, reflecting the tall trees from its clear bosom. Swallows skimmed over its peaceful surface, catching the sporting insects. Ducks, snipe, and flamingoes, with other beautifully coloured birds, played among the waters, or rested under the green shade of the trees that grew on the river banks, or on the green islands that studded it.

The sights were often very beautiful and pleasant, much more so than the sounds; for the birds there have not sweet notes, like our thrushes and blackbirds,

larks and nightingales. They make hoarse croaks or shrill cries, not at all pleasant to hear.

And could you have watched on the banks of the stream, you might have seen that everything was not as peaceful as appeared at first sight. There were kites and hawks sailing overhead, watching an opportunity to dart down upon any silly young duck or hare straying too far from home. There was the fox, slowly and noiselessly stealing on, to see what he could catch; the green serpents winding their way up the trees to suck the eggs in the nests, or make a meal off the young birds. There, too, at night, prowled the panther, the hyena, and the lordly lion.

One day Mr. Moffat washed his shirt in the river, and while waiting for it to dry in the sun he laid himself down upon a rock, and looked about him. Presently a crow rose from the ground, carrying something dangling from its claws. He called to his companions to watch the bird.

‘Oh,’ they cried, ‘it is only a crow with a tortoise. You will see it fall presently.’

As they spoke, down tumbled the tortoise. The crow flew down after it, caught it up almost as soon as it touched the ground, rose with it in the air higher than before, and then again let the creature drop.

This time the shell was well broken, and Mr. Moffat and his companions hastened to secure the feast which the crow had so nicely prepared for them. They found the bird had already begun to eat his dinner; and he little imagined he had broken the hard shell of the tortoise for any one but himself. However, for this once he had to give up his meal, and the tortoise was cooked for some one else.

Kites also kill tortoises in the same skilful manner. Did you ever think of the many wonderful ways in

which different kinds of birds, beasts, and insects have been taught to obtain their food ?

On this journey the travellers sometimes met with kind people, who had been taught by missionaries, and were glad to see one ; but more often the people whom they met would give them neither food, nor drink, nor shelter.

One day the promise which Jesus gave to those who should preach his gospel was fulfilled to Mr. Moffat. You will find the promise in Mark xvi. 18 : ‘ And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.’ This came literally true.

After a scorching ride across a plain, the hot and weary men and horses came near a small Bushman kraal. They all went towards the huts, but Mr. Moffat, ‘ because his horse would go,’ turned towards a small pool at some distance, and, feeling that he would enjoy a draught of the cool water, he dismounted, crept through the bushes, and laid himself down to drink.

No sooner had he drunk enough, and got up, than he felt a very peculiar taste and sensation in his mouth ; and, looking carefully at the pool, and the fence around it, he saw that he must have been drinking poisoned water. Pools are sometimes poisoned by the natives, in order to kill wild animals who come to drink. Mr. Moffat crept out again through the bushes, and mounted his horse, feeling—as he well might—that in a few minutes, most likely, he would fall off again—dead.

At that moment a man came running from the village, out of breath, and much frightened. He was hastening to prevent Mr. Moffat drinking of the poisoned water. He took him by the hand, and tried to pull him away, talking very fast all the time. Mr. Moffat could not understand what he said, but made signs to let him know that he had already drunk. For a moment the Bushman

stood speechless, and then ran with the sad news to the village, leaving Mr. Moffat to follow on his tired horse.

At the kraal, Mr. Moffat found every one in great trouble about him. He got off his horse ; no one spoke ; they gazed at him in silence, expecting every minute to see him drop down and die. Mr. Moffat smiled, to comfort them ; and soon they were all babbling and shouting. He, however, was feeling strangely ill, as though he were going to burst, his heart beat very fast, and he became very giddy. They brought him a quantity of good, pure water, which he drank, and this made him feel better. Indeed, he recovered so quickly, that, by the time some zebra meat had been cooked for the visitors, Mr. Moffat felt ready to eat it, and really enjoyed it, though not quite so much as he would have done if he had not been so nearly poisoned an hour or two before.

The Bushmen at this kraal were very kind ; and the next morning, when he left, Mr. Moffat gave them all the tobacco he had with him, so grateful did he feel to them. This present of tobacco made them jump about like mad creatures, they were so pleased.

Mr. Moffat was grieved not to know the language of these poor people, and as he had no interpreter with him, he was obliged to go away without telling them of Jesus, who came to save the poor and needy.

At the end of a week, the travellers reached a part of the stream called Kwees, and here they resolved to make a short cut right across the country to Griqua Town, with the hope of shortening the journey.

It was doubtful whether food or water could be obtained between Kwees and Griqua Town. What little food they had they kept carefully, and carried with them ; and they drank as much water as they could before starting, that they might not become thirsty very soon.

Shortest ways are not always the safest and quickest. So Mr. Moffat found now.

By accident, he and the man named Yantye were separated from the others, and could not find them again. Night came on, and they were alone on a wide plain. They got off their horses, intending to lie down on the ground, and wait for the light; and, in hopes of making their lost companions know in what direction to look for them, they fired a gun. The firing of the gun was answered, but it was by the roar of a lion, almost close by!

They could not gather wood for a fire, to scare the lion away; nothing was to be done except to mount the horses, and go on as well as they could through the dark night. The weary horses had not strength to go fast; and in the darkness Mr. Moffat and Yantye could not see their way, but the lion's roar sounded ever nearer and nearer.

Presently, the roar sounded all round them, echoing from rock to rock and from crag to crag,—the world seemed full of lions to the weary, lost men. Their horses had walked into a valley between hills and precipices, where the heights all round echoed back the roar. But although the lion followed so long, and roared so much, he did them no harm. He must have found something else to feast upon, for by and by the sound of his roar was less distinct; and then the moon rose, and, lighting up the rocks and crags, shone down with her peaceful beams upon the weary travellers.

At length they ventured to stop. The tired horses were allowed to rest and wander as they chose; while Mr. Moffat and Yantye laid themselves down on the ground, and in their sleep dreamed that they had plenty of pleasant food and refreshing water.

When morning dawned, Mr. Moffat and the guide arose from their hard resting-place, with their eyes hot and red, their mouths so parched with thirst that at first

they could not speak, and their bodies so burning with fever that they could hardly move. The food and water had been only a dream. The horses had found a little grass, and so were better off than their masters; but even they were so worn out that, after riding them a little while, their masters, though still more worn out, were obliged to get down and drive them.

How did those two men keep on their weary way through the day? The sun beat down upon them like fire, and sometimes they were glad even to put their heads into a deserted ant-hill, where there was at least something between them and the scorching rays. They had left the hills behind them; there was neither rock nor tree to shelter them from the heat, not a cloud in the sky to cast its grateful shadow upon them; and not a sound to be heard in the air, nor on the earth, save the shrill chirping of a kind of beetle. They dared not stop walking—to stop there would be to die. Yantye became delirious as he walked along, and the words he managed to say showed Mr. Moffat that the poor man did not know what he was talking about.

At last they could go on no longer. They came to a bush, and under it they sat down. Did they sit down to die? Who could help them? God was there in the desert. And now, in their great need, he directed Yantye's eyes to a hill at a little distance. Yantye was used to all the appearances of a dry and thirsty land, and as he looked at the hill-side he saw a bright green patch upon it, and knew at once that there was water there.

Hope helped them once more to rise, and, driving their horses still, they reached the water. There was the water, but they were so hot and exhausted that they dared not drink it directly. They knew that, pleasant as it looked, it would most likely kill them, if they

drank before they were cooler. They sat down a little way from the water to rest, enjoying the thought of the pleasure and relief which were coming, and, as soon as they thought it would be safe, went up to the pool to drink. Very thankful indeed they were for this water, although it was swarming with little live creatures, and dreadfully muddy and dirty.

Now once more both men and horses were able to continue their journey; and late at night they succeeded in reaching Mr. Andersen's house, at Griqua Town. When they entered Mr. Andersen's house, neither Mr. Moffat nor Yantye could speak a word; they could only make signs of pleasure at having reached their friends, and signs, too, to show that they needed water and food. They had neither of them tasted food for three days, and only once had tasted water.

Very much surprised were Mr. and Mrs. Andersen to see visitors arrive in such a state; and very kind they were too, you may be sure. Mrs. Andersen quickly fetched food, and brought it to them, and then as quickly set to work to make them some coffee, which revived them, and soon made them feel better.

How pleasant to lie down on a bed once more, without fear of lions, or pain from thirst! Mr. Moffat asked to have a large bucket full of water by his bedside; but Mr. Andersen was sure so much would make him ill, and would only leave him one tumblerful.

The rest of the party reached Mr. Andersen's house in a day or two. Happily for them, they had wandered towards the river, and had had plenty of water, so that, while they had been longer on the way than Mr. Moffat and Yantye, their journey had not been so painful.

They remained at Griqua Town for a few days, for all needed the rest. During those days Mr. Moffat

made a great many inquiries about the land, and the people around, that he might be able to tell Africaner whether or no it would be wise to move to Griqualand.

Mr. Andersen supplied his guests with water, biscuits, and tobacco before they left, and he and his wife wished them, with all their hearts, a safe journey home.

The whole party started on their homeward way, towards the desert upon which Mr. Moffat had so nearly died from thirst. Their horses were rested, well fed, and brisk now, so that they went on quickly. The weather was hot, but the sun was not shining; black, threatening clouds were gathering in the sky. At first these clouds were a pleasant kind of parasol, but presently an awful thunderstorm burst overhead. The vivid lightning startled the horses, the peals of thunder deafened their riders, the torrents of rain soaked them to the skin. As the thunder and lightning died away in the distance, a cold wind sprang up, and the rain changed to hail, which pattered down without mercy upon the wet and chilled travellers.

Night came on, they dismounted, and tried to find something dry with which to light a fire. Nothing was dry; they could not light the sticks they collected, and were obliged to lie down in their wet clothes upon the wet ground, without shelter from the rain and hail, which had not yet stopped.

Mr. Moffat thought of his old plan for a bed. He scraped away the wet sand until he came to some which was drier below, for the rain had not soaked in very far. There he and one of his companions went to sleep; but in the morning the whole party awoke, dizzy, stiff, cold, and covered with mud.

There was plenty of water, however, so at least they could wash. This they did and wrung some of the

water out of their soaking wet clothes before they put them on again.

The next thought was breakfast. The biscuit Mr. Andersen had given them would be quite a treat. The bag was opened. How unfortunate! the biscuit and tobacco had been packed side by side, and now they were so wet through and so mixed together that there was nothing but a nasty brown paste, which it was impossible to eat. There was nothing for breakfast but water.

The clouds had cleared away, and the sun shone out brightly, so that the travellers were soon warm and dry again. Indeed, before many hours had gone by, they were as much too hot as they had been too cold.

At last Africaner's kraal was reached again, after many wonderful escapes. After hearing what Mr. Moffat had to say of Griqualand, Africaner determined not to move at present, but to wait and see whether he could hear of anything better.

Our life on earth is like a journey. Very likely your journey through life is so far smooth and comfortable, but it is not likely always to be so. Many of us have to pass on our way through troubles which are like scorching heat and thirsty plains, or like pelting storms and angry tempests. If we are among those who journey to seek 'a better country, even a heavenly,' we have nothing to fear. God gives us this promise about our way in the Bible: 'A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'

Jesus will be all this to us, and much more. He will guide us so that we shall not wander from the way; He will protect us from the evil one, who goes about as a roaring lion, and bring us at last in safety to His own home in heaven.



CHAPTER V.

MR. MOFFAT AND AFRICANER VISIT THE CAPE.

NOT very long after his return from Griqua Town, Mr. Moffat resolved to pay a visit to Cape Town. Although Africaner had been so kind and good to him, still the missionary had been very lonely in the kraal; now a young lady was on her way from England, who had made up her mind to share his loneliness, and be his wife. Mr. Moffat wished to go and meet her, and be married to her.

Mr. Moffat told Africaner he was going to the Cape, and why he wished to do so, and asked him whether he would not come also. He thought a visit to civilised people would do Africaner good; that he would see and learn a great deal that would interest him, and improve both him and his people. He thought, too, that those who had heard of Africaner's great wickedness would find out for themselves how different a man he had become.

When Mr. Moffat asked him to go, Africaner exclaimed, 'Are you in earnest? I thought you loved me. Do you wish me to be killed? Have you forgotten that I am an outlaw, and that any one who kills me will have one thousand dollars?'

No, Mr. Moffat had not forgotten, and he said to

Africaner, 'It was the old Africaner who was outlawed, but God has made you "a new man." I am sure the governor of the Cape will not wish to kill you, but will be very glad to see you.'

Africaner answered, 'I shall roll my way upon the Lord; I know He will guide me.' And so he went to ask God to make him decide rightly about this journey.

The people publicly met to talk over the matter, and so important an affair was it, that it took them three whole days to decide. At last it was decided that Africaner should go, and then great preparations were made that their chief and missionary should go in comfort. The waggon was once more repaired, the clothes were looked over and mended as best they knew how. Some one was found to teach the school children, and many directions were given as to what the people were to do during the months the chief would be away.

It was agreed that when on the way the travellers arrived at any farmhouse, Africaner should behave, not as a chief, but as though he were one of Mr. Moffat's servants. This was wise, because some of the Boers might recognise him, and, still feeling angry, might kill him. Mr. Moffat gave Africaner one of his few remaining shirts to wear; and as he now had trousers, and a coat and hat of his own, he no longer looked like a savage.

The people felt parting with Africaner and their missionary very much, though they hoped in a few months to see them back again. Almost all the people who lived in the kraal went with them as far as the Orange river, and there they parted with many tears.

Mr. Moffat went first to Pella, the place to which the people of Warm Bath had gone when Africaner attacked them. No one was afraid to see him now. He was

welcomed with joy by the Christians at Pella; and there Africaner met other warriors, with whom he had fought savagely in times past, but who had now learned to worship and love the Prince of Peace.

One day, as they journeyed on towards the Cape, the waggon came near a farmhouse. The Boer who lived here was a really good man. Mr. Moffat had been to the house before; and now he went up and asked for water. The Boer, seeing that strangers had arrived, went out to see them; and when they met, Mr. Moffat held out his hand, and said how pleased he was to see his old friend again.

Instead of shaking hands, however, the farmer quickly put his hands behind him, and, only staring at Mr. Moffat, asked in a frightened voice, 'Who are you?'

'I am Robert Moffat,' was the answer. 'Have you forgotten me?'

'Moffat!' exclaimed the farmer. 'Is it a ghost?' and he stepped away backwards.

'I am not a ghost,' replied Mr. Moffat.

'Don't come near me!' again exclaimed the terrified farmer. 'What are you? Africaner murdered Moffat long ago.'

'But I am no ghost,' said Mr. Moffat; 'feel my hands and see.'

But the farmer only became more frightened. He stood staring at what he thought was a ghost; while his wife and children, watching from the door of the house, were astonished to see him behave so strangely to a visitor, instead of shaking hands and asking him to come in.

'Every one says you are murdered; and one man told me he had seen your bones,' persisted the farmer.

'Not my bones; feel them in my hands.' And at last

the farmer put his trembling hand into Mr. Moffat's. The hand proved to be real bone and flesh ; it did not melt away, nor turn into nothing when it was touched.

‘When did you rise from the dead?’ asked the farmer, for he still believed that Africaner had murdered him; and Mr. Moffat had to tell him all about the change in Africaner before he would believe that nothing dreadful had happened to the missionary.

So they walked on together towards the waggon, talking as they went about Africaner, but the farmer did not know he was there.

Mr. Moffat said, ‘He is now a truly good and Christian man.’

‘I can believe almost everything you say,’ replied the farmer, ‘but that I cannot believe. People talk of the seven wonders of the world; that would make eight.’

They talked on in this way until they reached the place where Africaner himself was sitting, and just as they reached him the farmer exclaimed,—

‘Well, if what you say about that savage is true, I have only one wish left. I should like to see him before I die. And, as sure as the sun is over our heads, when you go back to his kraal, I will go with you to see him, although he killed my own uncle.’

‘Do you really wish to see him?’

‘Indeed I do,’ again said the farmer.

‘Here then is Africaner,’ answered Mr. Moffat, pointing to the man at their feet.

The farmer started back in astonishment, and stared at the man. ‘Are you really Africaner?’ he asked.

The black man rose from the ground, took off his hat, made a polite bow, and answered, ‘I am.’

When the farmer had a little recovered from his surprise, he could only praise God for His great power and

goodness, in changing the heart of such a man. He then went and told his wife who the visitors were; she gladly welcomed them, supplied them with provisions



THE DUTCH FARMER AND AFRICANER.

and other things they needed, and wanted them to remain at the farm for a while. Mr. Moffat, however, hastened

away, lest other people, not so good and kind as this Boer and his wife, might hear that Africaner was in the country.

When at length the travellers reached the Cape, many people wished to see Africaner, of whom they had heard so much, but no one tried to kill him. The governor was very kind to him, and gave him a strong and useful waggon as a proof that he was quite forgiven, and no longer to be called an outlaw.

Little did Mr. Moffat think, when he crossed the Orange river, and bade farewell to his poor weeping black friends on its bank, that he was never going back to them again.

Mr. Moffat had been sent to Africaner's kraal by some Christian people who had joined together to form the London Missionary Society. Some gentlemen who had come out from this society to see how their missionaries were getting on, found Mr. Moffat at the Cape when they arrived. They took him with them, as a guide and interpreter, to the different places at which their missionaries were living; and more than this, finding him so brave, and good, and useful a man, they wished him to go and live among some tribes called Bechuanas, who seemed to need him more than Africaner did.

Mr. Moffat did not like the thought of leaving his kind friend Africaner; and yet for many reasons it seemed right that he should go to the Bechuanas. When Africaner heard of the poor Bechuanas, and how much they needed teaching, he himself wished Mr. Moffat to go to them, so unselfish had he grown. He told Mr. Moffat that he hoped some day to bring his people and come to live in Bechuanaland, so as to be near his missionary again. He offered to take Mr. Moffat's books

and furniture in his new waggon across the country to Lattakoo. Lattakoo is the name of the place at which Mr. Moffat was now going to settle; and as you know something of the difficulties of travelling in Africa, where no roads have been made, you will understand that this offer of Africaner's was very generous. So Mr. Moffat went to the Bechuanas, and Africaner returned to his own kraal.

A year later, Africaner arrived at Lattakoo with his waggon full of the things Mr. Moffat had left. How pleased they were to see each other again! to sing and pray together, and talk to each other about the Saviour who was so dear to both the white and black man.

After that visit Mr. Moffat and Africaner never met again on earth. Two years after, Africaner was called away from his desert home and poor little hut, to that land in which no one hungers or thirsts, but where Jesus has gone before to prepare a beautiful home for those who follow Him.

Africaner was dead; but you will be glad to hear that Titus became a Christian, and he did his best to fill his lost brother's place to the sorrowing people.





CHAPTER VI.

FIRST MISSIONARIES TO THE BECHUANAS.

MR. MOFFAT was not the first missionary to the Bechuanas. While the good Albrechts, and afterwards Mr. Moffat, had been teaching the people in the desert lands near Africaner's kraal, several missionaries had been sent to Bechuanaland.

Two of these missionaries seem to have forgotten that they went among the heathen in order to teach them about God. They bought and sold ivory,—bought it from the natives who hunted and killed the elephants, and sold it again to white men; in this way they grew rich. They professed to be the servants of God; but they only tried to serve themselves, and both were punished. One was murdered by the Bechuanas, and had to leave his gold and ivory, the other was left to listen to his own bad heart, until he came to believe that there was no God at all. So when he thought he was rich enough, he went nearer to the Cape, and bought a farm, where he lived—without God. He may have been rich; you know he could not have been happy.

Some years passed away, and two more missionaries were sent to the Bechuanas, Mr. Evans and Mr. Hamilton. Mothibi, the chief of Lattakoo, promised that when they came he would be kind to them.

‘I will be a father to them,’ he said.

But when the missionaries arrived, the chief changed his mind. He asked what they had brought for trading. They told him they had not come to trade, but to teach him about God.

The chief answered, ‘You may stay and help me to fight. But you want water, much water; you had better go to the river.’

They told him Mr. Hamilton could do carpenter’s work, and that another missionary was coming who was a smith, and could make hatchets for him.

This pleased Mothibi, but still he answered in the same way, ‘There is no water; there are no trees; the people have customs, and will not hear.’ After a while he said they might stop if only they would trade as the first missionaries had done, and not teach the people.

But these good men had come only to teach the people; they would remain for nothing else.

At last Mothibi turned to the people, who were crowded round in the large public fold to listen, and asked them whether the missionaries should stay.

‘They must not come here! they must not come here!’ shouted the crowd; and the king repeated after them, ‘They must not come here!’

So the missionaries yoked their oxen again into the waggon which had brought them; while the people pressed round, begging for presents of calico and tobacco. When they had received all that was to be had, they hooted and hissed, and cried,—

‘Away with the white people! Away with the white people!’

The white people went away to Griqua Town, and there stayed for a while, hoping that the chief would in time allow them to come to Lattakoo. Mr. Evans grew tired

of waiting, and went somewhere else ; but Mr. Hamilton remained, praying, and believing that the day would come when he might teach these poor Bechuanas.

At last Mothibi consented to receive the missionary. He did this because he had heard that Mr. Hamilton had been to the Cape, and had brought back to Griqua Town many things which would be useful to him and his people.

Mr. Hamilton gladly went to Lattakoo as soon as he found it possible, and took with him the useful things of which the chief had heard.

Before telling you what Mr. Moffat thought of the Bechuanas, when he went to join Mr. Hamilton, you shall hear a little story about Mr. Hamilton and a loaf of his.

He had built himself a little house, and had made a watercourse from the river to the ground which was to be his garden. He had dug his garden, and planted corn, that he might have bread to eat. The corn had sprung up ; he had watered it carefully from his watercourse, and it had grown tall and yellow. He cut down his ears of corn, and separated the wheat from the chaff. All this he had to do before he could get a loaf of bread, for at that time, in that far-away land, farmers, thrashers, millers, and bakers were not so much as thought of.

Next Mr. Hamilton took two handstones ; that is, two flat stones, one of which has a handle in the middle. Between the stones he placed his wheat, and, by working them round and round for some hours, succeeded in grinding the wheat into coarse flour. He then mixed his flour into a paste with some salt and water, kneaded it well, and placed it among the ashes of a fire to bake.

It was a fine large loaf, and as Mr. Hamilton lifted it up, and smelt it, and felt how hot and heavy it was,

he thought what a treat was in store for him. It was so long since he had tasted bread, and this would last him certainly a whole week.

He did not begin to eat it just then, however. It was time for him to go to the little chapel he had built, and to which he asked the people to come to be taught about God. So he placed his beautiful loaf carefully upon a shelf, fastened the door of his house securely, and went out to pray with and teach any one who might come to him. When this was over, Mr. Hamilton returned home, promising himself a capital supper off his nice new loaf.

He opened his house door and went in. The shelf upon which he had so carefully placed his loaf was empty—the bread was gone. The door had not been opened; how then had it been stolen? Ah! there was the tiny window. It looked too small for any one to squeeze through, but the thief had managed to creep in there, and to carry the loaf away.

This was the kind of thanks Mr. Hamilton received for leaving all his dear English friends and pleasant English comforts, and spending his life in trying to teach the Bechuanas. He was not looking for any thanks here; he could wait until Jesus said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’





CHAPTER VII.

MR. MOFFAT'S NEW HOME.



R. MOFFAT had gone to the Cape to meet a young lady who came from England to be his wife. The young lady arrived, and he was married to her before he said good-bye to Africaner; and when he went to Lattakoo, his wife went in the waggon with him. It was not a very comfortable home to which she was going; but she, like her husband, was willing to give up comfort for the sake of Jesus.

Mr. Moffat found the Bechuanas had no idea about God, and they did not care to hear about Him. They only liked white men who had something to give them; and they would pretend to listen to what the missionaries said, in order to get into favour, and have more things given to them.

The men employed their time in war or hunting; or, when they were at home, they watched the cows, milked them, or prepared skins and furs for making karosses.

The women dug the ground, sowed the grain, and reaped the harvest. They built the houses, made the fences round them, and fetched wood and water. Thus the harder work was often left to the women; and the men liked to have a good many wives, because the more

women there were to work for them, the more idle they could be.

A man would quietly lie down in a shady place, and watch his wives building him a new hut, or dragging large pieces of wood to the spot at which the hut was to be built. The day might be very hot, they might be very tired, or even not well, but he could see no reason in all that why he should get up and help them.

One day Mr. Moffat went to speak to some women who were building a hut; a wife of one of the chief men was just scrambling up on to the roof. It was not very easy to climb up, and she did not do it gracefully.

'You should get the men to do that part of the work,' said Mr. Moffat.

The women roared with laughter, and some men who were loitering about came to see what made them all so merry. Mr. Moffat's speech was repeated, and then every one, men and women, laughed louder than before.

The chief's wife, however, said it would be a very good plan to make their husbands work, and she wished the missionaries could give the men medicine to cure their laziness and make them work. Though she thought this idea a good one, most of the new ideas which the missionaries brought she and all the people considered to be very silly.

For instance, they thought it very silly of white men to put their legs and feet and bodies into 'bags,' and thought themselves wiser to remain quite uncovered. It seemed to them foolish to fasten these strange bags with the pretty things called by the white men buttons. They liked to string the buttons, and wear them as ornaments for the neck or hair. Washing was to them a very useless habit; to smear the body with grease and red earth was the proper thing. They laughed when

they saw the missionaries trying to keep their houses, beds, and clothes clean, and thought it very needless labour.

White men's ideas of what was nice might perhaps be learned in course of time. The dirt and want of manners annoyed and troubled the missionaries very much, especially as the people would come into their house without being asked; but this was not a chief thing. The first and greatest difficulty was to make the Bechuanas understand, or wish to understand, something of the great God who had made them.

Once Mr. Moffat talked for a long time to a chief, as he stood leaning on his spear. The chief did listen; that was something; and when Mr. Moffat had said all he wished to say, the chief turned to thirty of his men who were near, and repeated what he had heard.

'Here is Mosheté' (Mr. Moffat was called Mosheté by the natives),—'Here is Mosheté,' he said, 'who tells me that the heavens were made, and the earth also, by a beginner, called God. Did you ever hear anything like this? He says God makes the sun rise and set; that God makes the plants and corn grow, and the grass green; that God makes the wind blow and the rain fall.' Then, casting his arms about and around, he exclaimed, 'Mosheté says that God works in everything we see and hear. Did you ever hear such words?'

The men looked ready to burst out laughing at such nonsense. 'Wait,' continued the chief; 'I will tell you more. Mosheté says we have spirits in us which will never die, and that we shall rise and live again. Open your ears to-day. Did you ever hear such fables as these?'

The listeners all laughed as loudly as possible; and when they were tired of laughing, the chief turned to

Mr. Moffat and said, 'Tell us no more such fables, it is worse than the stories of children. Are you mad?'

This chief did listen to what was said; but more often it happened that, after the missionaries had tried for a long time to explain something to a man, who seemed to be attending, he would turn to them and say, 'What is that you wish to tell me?'

The missionaries had built a little chapel, and asked the people to go there and hear about God and His Word. Sometimes a few people would come. They did not come to listen to the teacher, or to pray to God. They would squat upon the rough logs of wood put for seats, with their knees up to their chins, and there chatter and laugh, or go to sleep and snore aloud. Then, perhaps, some one who was asleep would tumble off the seat upon the floor, which would make every one else shout with laughter.

At other times no one would come to the chapel; or a thief would just pop his head in at the door to see which of the teachers was talking, and then run off to the house of the missionary who was in the chapel, to see what he could steal.

Mr. Moffat built himself a house at Lattakoo. Not a round hut like those of the natives, nor such a one as he had at Africaner's kraal; but a square house, more like an English cottage, in which he hoped his wife might be comfortable. This was a work which made a great deal of labour; but it was finished at last, and looked quite neat and homelike; and yet Mr. and Mrs. Moffat could not enjoy it.

The dirty Bechuanas would come in, and stay in. All day long they were there; touching the furniture with their fingers, and leaving red, greasy marks upon everything they handled, and wherever they sat. They

would squat down and have a chatter; they would lie down on the floor and take a nap; and when at last they went away, they would carry off knives, spoons, files, hatchets, or anything else which they fancied might be of use to them.

In course of time a little baby-girl was born, and then it must have been more disagreeable than ever to have the house full of the Bechuanas; for the baby had to be nursed and looked after, while some one must watch to see that things were not stolen.

One day Mrs. Moffat was going to the chapel, and wished to lock up her house, as she always did before leaving it. There was a Bechuana woman in the kitchen, and it would not do to lock her in. Mrs. Moffat had her little baby, Mary, in her arms, and was waiting; so she gently asked the woman to go out. The woman, instead of doing what she was asked, seized a large piece of wood and threatened to throw it at Mrs. Moffat. What could Mrs. Moffat do? To save herself and her baby, she ran away, and left the woman in the kitchen, where she stole the things she wanted, and then walked off.

This baby of Mr. and Mrs. Moffat's was not the only little child in the house. On one of Mr. Moffat's journeys he fell in with a party of Bushmen. They were digging a grave for a woman who had just died; and into the grave these heathen men were going to put, with their dead mother, two little children whom she had left. The children were alive, poor little things; but the men did not want to have the trouble of them, and so were going to get rid of them by burying them, which was a very common thing to do in Bechuanaland in those times.

Mr. Moffat begged that the children might not be

buried, and offered to take them home and care for them. This the men allowed him to do, so they were put into the waggon instead of into their mother's grave, and carried to Lattakoo, where they were well cared for and taught. Mr. and Mrs. Moffat named these children Ann and Dicky. As she grew older and learned better ways, Ann grew to be a useful little help, and was very fond of nursing the white babies, as they came one after another to the missionary's home.

Besides building their houses, and a house in which to worship God together, the missionaries had to make gardens. The gardens were not for flowers; flowers they could for the present do without; but corn and vegetables they must have for food. They fenced in their land; with great labour they dug a watercourse from the river; they sowed their precious seed; and hoped to have corn for bread without much more trouble.

Their hopes were in vain. The Bechuana women had watched the digging of the watercourse, wondering much what the white men were doing; but when they saw how the water flowed down the channel to the white men's gardens, they thought how useful it would be; it would save them going to the river for water. Soon Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Moffat found the water ceased to flow to their ground. How was this? The women had been copying their teachers; they had dug channels from the watercourse into their own gardens, and had filled up the channel which had brought the water into the missionaries' gardens. Of course the water ran to the Bechuana gardens and left the others dry.

The missionaries complained, as well they might; the Bechuanas laughed. This was a serious affair, and no laughing matter to the ill-used white men; they still complained. The Bechuanas grew angry, and determined

that no one should use the watercourse. They went to the river, and broke down the dam from which the water was turned into the watercourse, so that no water ran in at all.

The missionaries found that, after all their labour, the only way was to walk to the river and fetch whatever water they were obliged to have for their houses and gardens. This was hard and weary work; and they often carried with them their knives, forks, and spoons, for, if no one was at home to guard them, these useful things would be stolen in their absence.

Many nights the missionaries spent in watering their gardens, instead of sleeping. The result of their care was seen at last; there were golden ears of corn waving in the sunshine, and carefully shaded greens hiding among the bushes. Who was to enjoy these good things? Not the labourers. The thievish Bechuanas stole them almost all; they would not have cared if their white friends had died from want of vegetables.

The people did just the same to the white men's cattle as to everything else. In the evening they would sometimes amuse themselves by driving the animals from the fold into a bog; and when it was too dark to find them, they would come to Mr. Moffat's house, and tell him of the accident, as they called it. Before daylight dawned, some of the oxen would be killed by wild beasts, or eaten by the deceitful men who had driven them away. The sheep they often stole, and cut off the tails or broke the legs of those they left.

Both Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton and their wives must have had great love to Christ to endure all this unkindness and ingratitude for His sake. The Bechuanas could not understand it. They thought it was not possible these white men should be content to suffer so

much, that they might teach a few foolish fables, which no one could believe. Some said, 'They have come to our country to get a living.' This was not a very bright idea; every one could see that the white men were richer than themselves, and could get things from their own country which had never been seen or heard of at Lattakoo. Some brighter ones said, 'No; they must be wicked people, who have committed some crime. They would be killed for it in their own country; that is why they have come.'

One day Mr. Moffat's knife was stolen out of his coat pocket while he was in the chapel. Mr. Moffat asked a chief to try and get the knife for him again. The chief did not trouble himself to do this, but asked, 'What is the reason you do not return to your own land? If your land was a good one, or if you were not afraid of going back, you would not stay here, where people devour you.'

Mr. Moffat could not make the chief understand why he remained. He and Mr. Hamilton still worked, and prayed, and waited. They believed the day would come when the Bechuanas would know why they had left their own land, and would thank them for doing so.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE RAINMAKER.

THE country round Lattakoo often suffers from long drought. Sometimes no rain falls for many months together, and then so little, that in an hour or two it is all dried up. The cattle die from want of pasture, the people die from want of food. At the time of which you are now hearing, such a drought had continued year after year, and the Bechuanas were losing their cattle fast, and were nearly starved themselves.

God has in a wonderful way prepared the land in this part of Africa for these long droughts, and we find there many plants and animals which can live without water for a long time, yet not so long as these droughts often continue. Many and many a little child, many a man, many a woman, and many a beast has died in South Africa for want of the precious rain.

In South Africa rain is so much thought of that almost all the native tribes had among them a person called a rainmaker; some tribes had two or three such men.

These rainmakers are very clever in deceiving the people, and gain so much power that they are believed in very much.

While the Bechuanas were suffering so much from the want of rain, there dwelt far away to the east, among another tribe, a very famous rainmaker, who was said to be very successful indeed in making the showers fall.

To this man the Bechuanas sent messengers, begging that he would come to their aid. These messengers were told on no account to come back without the rainmaker; and if he did not think it worth while to come so far, they might promise him as much payment as they liked.

They were to tell him that he should be the richest man that ever lived, and have flocks and herds given him enough to cover all the hills, so that he might even wash his hands in milk. The rainmaker thought these promises sounded like reward enough to repay him for his trouble, so he consented to go to Lattakoo with the Bechuana messengers.

In the meantime the Bechuanas at home were watching and waiting for the wonderful man to arrive. Once a report came to the town that the messengers had been killed. All the bright hope was changed to disappointment, all the expectation to gloom. Every one went about with a gloomy face; but the sun shone as unclouded as ever. They would have danced had they seen gloom in the sky.

At last a man came running to say that the rainmaker was really coming, and was very near; and that he sent orders for every one in the town to wash their feet.

This order was not easy to obey, but the people shouted for joy, and rushed off in haste to the river. It was nearly dry, but there were still pools here and there, and in these they washed their feet, that they might be ready when the great man appeared.

Black clouds were gathering in the sky. Was the rainmaker already at work? He began to descend the hill towards the town. In the clouds above him the forked lightning played, the thunder echoed from the rocks around him; and on the town beyond him large drops of rain were falling. The people danced and shouted, wild with happiness and hope. The rainmaker entered the town, and with a loud voice he proclaimed that he was going to make so much rain, that the women must plant their gardens on the hill-sides this year, for the plains would all be covered with water.

That day, however, only a few drops fell. The thunder and lightning and heavy rain-clouds were swept away by the wind. After all the excitement and noise of the rainmaker's coming was over, some of the men went to the missionaries to laugh at them.

'Where is your God?' they asked. 'Have you seen our god? Have you not seen him cast from his arms his fiery spears and rend the heavens? Have you not heard with your ears his voice in the clouds? You talk of Jehovah and Jesus. What can they do?'

The missionaries did not reply. They knew that God Himself was able to answer these questions, and show what He could do.

All the people around soon heard of the famous rainmaker who was at Lattakoo; and many of the chiefs came to the town to visit him, and show their respect for him. The missionaries did not go to see him; the rainmaker came to visit them instead. He had heard of these strange white men, and was afraid they would be his enemies. But when he went to their house, they received him kindly, and, though they told him he was a deceiver, he saw they did not mean to quarrel with him. He liked the tobacco they gave him, and the wooden and

iron things they made in their workshops he thought so wonderful, that he said he should like to have the missionaries in his own country, to make such useful things for him.

The rainmaker and his wife were provided with a hut in which to live until the rain was made. But the rainmaking seemed after all to be no such easy matter; weeks passed away, and none fell. When clouds appeared in the sky, the women were forbidden to sow seeds, or plant anything, lest the showers should be frightened away. They were sent into the country round to gather certain herbs and roots, which the rainmaker said he required to burn, and so make a particular kind of smoke to entice the clouds. He asked, too, for sheep and goats, which he killed as a kind of sacrifice, pretending that in this way he could please the clouds. But neither the smoke nor the sheep and goats brought the rain. The clouds were hard to please.

Then the rainmaker complained. 'Some one must have been disobeying my orders. The women must have been sowing while the clouds were in the sky. The sheep and goats are not strong medicine. Give me oxen, and you shall see ox rain.'

One day he fell asleep in his house, while his wife was pressing the whey from her milk sack. While he was asleep, it began to rain. One of the principal men of the town ran to the hut to thank the rainmaker for the shower, and was very much surprised to find him asleep, and knowing nothing about the rain which was falling.

'*Héla ka rare*' (halloo, my father), exclaimed the astonished man, as he woke the rainmaker. 'We thought you were making rain.'

Up jumped the sleeper, wide awake, and with his senses

all alive in a minute. Pointing to his wife, he answered, 'Do you not see my wife making rain as fast as she can.'

The man went away quite satisfied; and soon all the town heard that the rainmaker had churned the shower out of a milk sack.

Unfortunately it was only a shower, and in a few hours the sun had dried up every trace of the moisture. Weeks and weeks passed on, but the rainmaker and his wife found no more showers in their milk sack.

The people, thin as skeletons, were wandering by hundreds about the open country, searching for roots or anything to keep them alive, while many laid themselves down and died of starvation. No wonder they became impatient, and asked why the promised rain did not come.

The rainmaker knew perfectly well he was deceiving the people, that he could make no rain. But he thought, 'Some day it is sure to rain; if I can deceive the people till that day comes, they will believe that I made it. I must give them something to do to fill up the time.'

He told the men he must have a baboon before he could make rain. Not a dead one; they must catch it and bring it to him alive. And not only alive; it must not be hurt at all, it must not be scratched nor bruised, nor have even a hair wanting.

This was indeed no easy task, but away went the men to hunt the baboons. Up the rocks and precipices among the hills scrambled the men, while the animals leaped from rock to rock, grunting and screaming, or looked down from the heights upon their pursuers, grinning and gnashing their teeth. At last the men caught a young baboon, and with great joy returned to the town with their prize. They took it to the rain-

maker; he looked at it carefully, and then, with an expression of the deepest sorrow, exclaimed, 'My heart is rent in pieces! I am dumb with grief!'

What was the matter?

He pointed to the baboon's ear; it was scratched and bleeding: he pointed to its tail; some hairs had been rubbed off. 'Did I not tell you I could not make rain if there was one hair wanting?' said he.

The men went away again to hunt the baboons, and caught another; but it too was imperfect. No rain was to be had through the baboons.

The rainmaker tried another plan. He said the clouds needed very strong medicine, and a lion's heart was very strong medicine. If the people would get a lion's heart, he would make enough rain to sweep away the whole town.

One day a lion attacked some cattle at a distance from Lattakoo. As soon as this was known, away went a party of hunters to kill the lion, and bring its heart to the rainmaker. The lion was shot, and no sooner was it dead than the hunters cut it up, and, after carefully taking out its heart, roasted its flesh and made a feast. When the lion was eaten, they returned to the town in great triumph, carrying with them the heart, and shouting conquerors' songs as they marched along.

The rainmaker took the lion's heart up to the top of a hill. Here he built fires, and made smoke rise towards the sky, he stretched out his arms, he beckoned to the clouds, he even shook his spear at them, and threatened to punish them, if they did not come at his command and bring rain.

What cared the clouds? The clouds obeyed their Almighty Ruler, and all the threats of this foolish man did not bring the much-needed rain.

Now the rainmaker said the fault was with the missionaries. It happened that Mr. Moffat had lately been to Griqua Town, and had brought back, among other things, a bag of chalk. This bag the rainmaker had seen, and now he declared there was a bag of salt in the mission storehouse which was keeping the rain away.

The chief, Mothibi, visited Mr. Moffat, with a number of his attendants, to inform him of the charge laid against him. Mr. Moffat listened very gravely till the chief had finished, and then led the way to the storehouse, to show the salt to the chief. But when they came to look, lo ! the salt was chalk. Mothibi could not help laughing when he found that the man who pretended to govern the clouds did not know chalk from salt.

As the missionaries were themselves suffering much from want of rain, and their cattle were dying as much as the cattle of the poor Bechuanas, they had hoped that the people would not be so silly as to think they kept the rain away on purpose. But they were silly enough to believe even this, and they said Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Moffat were the cause of all their trouble. The sound of the chapel bell, they were sure, frightened the clouds away ; and they knew that the missionaries bowed down in their own houses, and talked to something bad in the ground.

But at last the people began to suspect the rainmaker himself, and to doubt his power. The women were the first to blame him. One day he came to Mr. Moffat's house with a very long face, and sat down to have a talk. He asked how the women were in Mr. Moffat's country. Mr. Moffat, thinking he wanted to know how tall they were, pointed to his wife, and said some of the women were taller, and some were shorter than she was.

‘That is not what I mean,’ he replied. ‘I want to

know how they act when they take part in public affairs ?'

Mr. Moffat told him that in his country, when the women took part in public affairs, they made every one do as they wished.

'Wait,' he said, 'until the women are on our side, as they are now on yours, and there will be no more rain-makers in the country.'

'May that time never come !' exclaimed the rainmaker.

Mr. Moffat answered that that time certainly would come.

The rainmaker looked very much vexed, and asked, 'What shall I do ? I wish all the women were men. I can get on with the men, but I cannot manage the women.'

Mr. Moffat told him the women had good reason to complain of him, for he had promised them rain, and had given them none. 'You had better act like an honest man, and say you cannot make rain,' he said.

'They will kill me,' answered the poor man.

This was very likely, and Mr. Moffat knew it ; still, he answered, 'Be honest, and if they try to kill you, I will try to save you.'

The rainmaker said nothing more ; he walked away to his hut, and for a whole fortnight nobody saw him.

At the end of a fortnight he one day appeared in the *khotta*, or large public fold, where the men used to meet for talking, and there he proclaimed that he had at last found out the reason for the long drought. Every one gathered round, anxious to hear the secret.

'Do you not see,' said he, 'when clouds come over us, Hamilton and Mosheté look up at them. The clouds are frightened by their pale white faces. There will be no rain while they stay in the country.'

Very quickly the missionaries were told how wrong it was in them to look at the clouds, and that they had better go quite away. They assured the people they had intended no harm by looking up; but, as they were as anxious for rain as any one could be, they would be very careful not to do it again.

So Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Moffat walked about with their eyes on the ground, to avoid giving offence. Still no rain came, but on all sides the men were looking angry and revengeful. They were disappointed, and their faith in the rainmaker was gone.

By and by, the missionaries heard by accident that some one was to be speared. Who could the somebody be? Was it themselves, or was it the rainmaker? They thought it must be the rainmaker, and wished to save his life; but the people were evidently all trying to keep the secret from them. How could they discover it?

Mr. Moffat thought of a plan. There was a woman, a chief's wife, to whom he had often been kind when she was ill. This woman and he were rather friendly, and he determined to find out through her. He paid her a visit, and, after a few kind inquiries and a little talk, he said,—

‘Why are they thinking of killing the rainmaker? Surely they do not intend to eat him? Why not let the poor man go home?’

She answered quickly, ‘Who told you?’

It was true then. Mr. Moffat rose from his seat to take leave, saying, ‘That is all I wanted to know.’

In a moment the woman saw it was she who had let out the secret. Mr. Moffat had asked his question to see what she would answer.

She called after him, ‘Do not let them know I told you. They will kill me too.’

Of course Mr. Moffat did not wish her to be killed, so he said nothing about his visit to any one. At that moment thirty men or more were in the *khotla*, all talking over some piece of business, and he went straight to the fold, and accused them of consulting to put the rainmaker to death. He told them he was sure they were now planning it, and that they had determined to do the cruel deed. He told them how great a sin it would be. He asked them to spare the man's life; he begged them to send him back to his own country instead of killing him.

One old man rose in a great rage, and, quivering his spear in his hand, as though he intended to throw it, he spoke of the terrible drought, the lean herds, the dying people, and vowed he would send his spear into the deceiver's heart.

Mr. Moffat replied, that, as begging and entreating did no good, he would offer a ransom for the man's life.

The men were astonished. 'Do you not know that the rainmaker is your enemy?' they said. 'If he had had his way, you would be dead now.'

Mr. Moffat did know it well; but Jesus, his Master, had said, 'Love your enemies.' The people had thought their missionary only silly in telling them fables about Jesus; but this wish to save a man who had tried to do him harm—what could it mean? Was Mosheté in earnest? They had never heard so strange a wish.

The ransom was accepted; the rainmaker was saved; and the chief Mothibi himself conducted him safely away from the town. He had no rewards to carry away with him; no herds of cattle, as thank-offerings from a grateful people; no songs of praise, no blessings were heard as he went. He went empty-handed, poorer than when he came. The people cursed him in their

hearts; and he had to thank the missionaries that he had escaped with his life.

When Mothibi returned to Lattakoo, having seen the rainmaker safely out of his part of the country, he entered Mr. Moffat's house, looking very pleased with himself, and evidently thinking he had done something very good. The missionaries too thought he had been good, and deserved praise, and they did praise him heartily for what he had done.

Although the rainmaker was not killed at Lattakoo, he was speared, not very long afterwards, by order of a chief called Makaba. It was not because he could not make rain, but because Makaba's son wanted the rainmaker's wife to be his; and he and his father decided that the easiest way to get her would be to kill her husband.





CHAPTER IX.

THE BECHUANAS WISH THEIR MISSIONARIES TO GO AWAY.



HE rainmaker was gone, but the troubles of the missionaries were not yet over. They were blamed for everything that went wrong.

The wild Bushmen were very troublesome sometimes in stealing cattle; and because the missionaries did not like the Bushmen to be shot for doing this, the Bechuanas said Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton helped them to steal. Mr. Moffat told the people how Jesus, his heavenly Master, commanded him to be kind to every one; but they only shouted in reply, '*Maka hëla, maka hëla*' (lies only, lies only).

You have heard how the people who went to the chapel behaved there. A great many had never been at all, because their chiefs threatened to do all kinds of dreadful things to them if they went.

There stood in the chapel an old-fashioned Dutch clock, on the top of which was a box open in front, and in the box were two little wooden soldiers. Whenever the clock struck, these little soldiers marched out of their box.

Should you not have thought it a very pretty sight, and have liked to watch the little soldiers march out at every hour? Very likely the Bechuanas would have

admired the wooden figures too, if they had not believed they were alive.

Some of the chiefs had been told that soldiers were coming from Cape Colony to conquer their country, and to take them all prisoners. They fancied, therefore, that if they went into the chapel these little men would seize them by the throat, and make them slaves. No wonder they kept away if they believed such nonsense as this; but no one who had ventured to the chapel had been seized and made into slaves.

So frightened did the people become, that Mr. Moffat was obliged to take down his two little soldiers, and even to cut a piece off one of them, in order to convince them that it was nothing but painted wood. But even when every one knew quite well that the soldiers were not alive, and could do them no harm, they would not come to the chapel, nor would they believe that the missionaries only wished to do them good.

One day a chief, with about a dozen attendants, came and sat down under a large tree not far from Mr. Moffat's house. Mr. Moffat saw him, and wondered what he was going to do there. Before long a messenger came to fetch the missionaries; the chief had something to say to them.

As they approached, the chief arose, and with his spear in his hand, as though ready to kill them, he spoke to them. He told them that all the chiefs were resolved that the white strangers should no longer dwell in the country; they were to go away at once. If the mission-land had not been bought from the Bechuanas, and paid for honourably, perhaps the white strangers would have been compelled to leave. But the land upon which their houses and the chapel were built belonged no more to Mothibi; he had sold it to the Missionary Society, and

so Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton had a right to it. Besides, they had not yet given up the hope of seeing a brighter day dawn on themselves and the benighted Bechuanas, and did not wish to give up their work and their hope.

‘We are resolved to stay,’ they answered. ‘We have suffered much from you, but it was because you knew no better. If you are determined to get rid of us, you must kill us or burn our houses. You will not hurt our wives and little children, we are sure.’

When the chief heard the missionaries speak in this way, he shook his head, and, turning to his companions, said, ‘These men must have ten lives, when they fear death so little. They must really know they are going to live again.’

No wonder he was surprised. How could he understand such bravery as this? He was a warrior, but he could not deny himself thus. He was a chief, but he could not govern himself as these men were governed. His life was very dear to him; he knew nothing more precious than himself. To the missionaries also life was precious, but there was something they counted dearer than life. ‘For the work of Christ they were nigh unto death, not regarding their life.’





CHAPTER X.

DANGER—THE BECHUANAS CHANGE THEIR MINDS.

AT last the day dawned in which the people of Lattakoo were to learn the value of the missionaries.

The events which led the Bechuanas to change their minds were very alarming. But for Mr. Moffat, or rather, but for the use God made of him, all the people would have been killed or scattered; their town would have been destroyed; their cattle would have been all taken away.

For some time reports had reached Lattakoo of a vast army of savages to the north. It was said that a woman, named Mantatee, was at the head of this army, and that it was marching on, nearer and nearer to Lattakoo, leaving everywhere behind it ruin and death. Such reports were so likely not to be true, that, although the people were alarmed, Mr. Moffat did not take much notice of them. He was preparing his waggon for a journey northward to visit Makaba,—the chief who had murdered the rainmaker. Makaba was chief of a large tribe living two hundred miles from Lattakoo; and Mr. Moffat was going to see him because he wished to persuade him to keep at peace with Mothibi, and wanted to know if he would allow teachers to come and live at his town.

Mothibi did all he could to prevent Mr. Moffat from taking this journey; he did not wish him to go to Makaba. White traders sometimes came to Lattakoo to buy the ivory and skins which the people had collected; these traders had not yet found the way to Makaba's town, and Mothibi did not wish them to go there. He knew that if Mr. Moffat went in his waggon, the traders' waggons would soon follow, and this he wished to prevent.

He told Mr. Moffat that Makaba was a very wicked and cruel chief, and would certainly kill him. 'If you are determined to go,' he said, '*Ma-Mary*' (that was Mrs. Moffat) 'and the two little children had better go back to their own country at once; they will never see you again.'

He forbade any of his men to go with the missionary, so that Mr. Moffat had no one to take with him except his own servants. Still this did not hinder him. He started, and, trusting that God would guard him, he travelled on several days' journey north of Lattakoo.

At every kraal and town on the way Mr. Moffat heard the dreadful Mantatee army talked about. At one place he was told that the savages had attacked and taken a town only one hundred miles off. This town which they said had been destroyed was on the way Mr. Moffat had to take. Should he go on? No one had seen the invaders; every one had heard of them from some one else. Perhaps the reports were a great deal worse than the reality; most likely they were. Spies had been sent out; but even they had returned, and said they had not seen the enemies.

So Mr. Moffat went on to within fifteen miles of this village that people said had been destroyed by the Mantatees, and yet he had not seen them. But here, on the heights around, there were strange men looking down at his lumbering waggon, and they did not come near, as

the natives of the country generally did. This was very alarming. Were they Mantatees ?

At last two natives passed who cleared up the doubt. 'Yes,' they said; 'the village in front is taken and destroyed. There is a large savage army there.' And, pointing to the men on the hills, they said, 'Yes, they are Mantatees; we are fleeing from them.'

Mr. Moffat turned his oxen round at once, and went back as fast as possible. At every village he reached he told the people that the news of the Mantatee army was quite true, and that they must prepare, and as he travelled back, he thought over what could be done to save the country and the people.

As soon as he reached Lattakoo, an assembly of the chief men was called in the *khotla*, and Mr. Moffat gave them an account of all that he had seen and heard. Mantatee was not the name of a woman, but the tribe to which this army belonged were called Mantatees, or Makololo. They had destroyed many kraals, killed immense numbers of people, and they were said to be cannibals. When Mr. Moffat had finished, all the dark faces around were covered with gloom, and for some minutes not a sound was heard.

At last Mothibi arose. 'This day it is Mosheté who saves us,' he said. Then he thanked Mr. Moffat for taking the journey and bringing them information about the savages and their danger in time to prepare to meet it. 'This day you are our father, Mosheté. What shall we do? Tell us, and we will do it.'

Mr. Moffat said there were only two things that could be done. They must either leave their town and go over the Orange river into the colony, where the English soldiers would protect them, or else they must send to Griqua Town, where the people were stronger and more civilised, and ask them to come and help in the fight

against the Mantatees. Some of the people wanted to run away into the great Kalahari desert. But Mr. Moffat persuaded them not to do so, for there they would most likely perish from hunger and thirst.

It was decided to send to Griqua Town for help; and now everything in Lattakoo was bustle and preparation for war. Mr. Moffat started again in his waggon, and made all the haste he could to the Griquas. Waterboer, the Griqua chief, as soon as he heard the news, set off on horseback to Campbell, a place at which he could get help from the English. He promised to lose no time in coming to Lattakoo with a party of soldiers, there to join the Bechuanas in going out to fight against the Mantatees.

Mr. Moffat returned to Lattakoo in company with Mr. Thompson, a gentleman who wished to see the fight and give what help he could. The day after Mr. Moffat's return, Mothibi sent out orders to all the towns and villages around for the chiefs to come to a *pitsho*. This is a Bechuana parliament.

A thousand men assembled at this *pitsho*. They came to Lattakoo, some singing war-songs as they marched along, some pretending already to be fighting, throwing their arms and legs about in the very strangest attitudes they could think of.

The place of meeting was, of course, the large *khottla*, or public fold, round which the men seated themselves in a circle, leaving the centre space free for the speakers. Each man held before him his shield with a number of spears fastened to it. A quiver full of poisoned arrows hung from every man's shoulders, and in every right hand was a battle-axe. Many of the chiefs were adorned with panther skins and tails, and had plumes of feathers waving on their heads.

The *pitsho* was opened by the chief Mothibi. He

bounded into the space that had been left for the speakers, his spear in his hand, a lady's white chemise his only dress; and there, before beginning his speech, he capered and jumped about, making the strangest antics he could. Then he began,—

‘Be silent, ye Batlapis.’ The people of the Batlapis tribe answered, as was proper, with a groan, to show they were listening.

‘Be silent, ye Barolongs.’ The Barolongs groaned.

‘Be silent, ye Makooas.’ The Makooas groaned. And so every tribe represented in the meeting was told to listen, and groaned in reply.

Then Mothibi took a spear and pointed it northward, towards the still distant Mantatees. He cursed them, and continually thrust out his spear, as though thrusting it into an enemy. This was their way of saying that war was declared.

‘Ye sons of great warriors,’ he said, ‘the Mantatees are our enemies; they are a strong and conquering people; they have defeated many tribes, and now they are advancing towards us. We have heard what they mean to do, and what their manners and weapons are. They are strong and many; we cannot stand against them separately, we must stand together, for the cause is a great one. You have all seen what Mosheté has done to save us. If we are brave, the Mantatees can come no farther. You see the white people are our friends. Thompson, a chief man of the Cape, has come to us on horseback. He has not come behind our houses like a spy, but openly. He is one on whom the light of day may shine; he is our friend. Let every one speak his mind, and then I shall speak again.’

Once more Mothibi cursed the Mantatees, using his spear as at the beginning of his speech; then he pointed

it towards the sky, while all the people shouted ‘*Pula!*’ (rain), and amidst shoutings and caperings he sat down in his place on the ground.



AN AFRICAN PARLIAMENT.

After each speech came a wild war-song, and after each war-song a fresh speaker jumped up and danced about.

The second speaker said, 'To-day we are called upon to fight an enemy, who is the enemy of us all. Mosheté has been near the camp of the enemy; we are all glad he went. What are we to do? The Mantatees are as strong as lions, they kill, and eat, and leave nothing.'

This chief did not speak loudly enough to be heard all over the *khotla*, and an old man interrupted him, and asked him to 'roar aloud.' Perhaps the old man was a little deaf.

Another chief said, 'We must not act like Bechuanas this day, we must act like white people. Is this our *pitsho*? No, it is the *pitsho* of our teachers, therefore we must speak and act like white people.'

This meeting went on for some hours. When all those who wished to speak had done so, Mothibi once more bounded forward.

'We must go out against the enemy,' he said. 'We must not allow them to come nearer; they must not take our towns and fill our homes with death and bloodshed. It is good that the white people should teach us what to do. I wish evil to those who will not obey. There are many of you warriors who do not deserve to eat out of a bowl, but only out of a broken pot. Think on what has been said, and obey without murmuring. Prepare for the battle. Let your shields be strong, your quivers full of arrows, and your battle-axes as sharp as hunger.'

When Mothibi's speech was ended, all the people shouted, jumped up from the ground, and joined in capering about with him. For two hours they all jumped about with their spears in their hands, and then the parliament was over.



CHAPTER XI.

THE MANTATEES.

ELEVEN days passed before the promised help arrived from Griqua Town. They were eleven busy days at Lattakoo; the Bechuanas were preparing their weapons, sharpening their axes, poisoning their arrows, restringing their bows. The missionaries were busy also. They packed and buried all their heavy goods, that they might have as little as possible to hinder them, should they be forced to flee for their lives. Many prayers were offered up by those good men and their wives, that they all might be saved from their enemies by the God who is the fortress and deliverer of His people.

A hundred horsemen, with some chiefs, arrived from Griqua Town. They provided Mr. Moffat with a horse, and asked him to go with them to meet the Mantatees, in order that he might, if possible, speak to the leaders of the army, and persuade them to go back to their own country, without any more bloodshed.

Before starting from Lattakoo, the missionaries, and those among the Griquas who were Christians, met to ask God their Father to be their shield and protector; to prevent the battle if He saw fit; but if they were forced to fight, to fight with them, and for them.

All the time that these preparations were going on, the Mantatee army was coming nearer and nearer. They had not hurried, for they felt quite certain of conquering the people at Lattakoo. They knew nothing about the hundred mounted and armed soldiers from Griqua Town; they did not even know that Mr. Moffat had been so near them, and had returned to give the alarm. They had already reached a place very near Lattakoo, when the Bechuanas and Grikvas came towards them. Half of them were in the town, and the other half outside of it.

Even the half outside the town was a great host. Their dark bodies so blackened the ground, that Mr. Moffat, when he saw them in the distance, did not know that they were men. He fancied there had been a large fire among the bushes and grass, which had left all the ground charred and black, with little wreaths of smoke rising up from among the ashes. But as he went nearer he saw that the smoke was rising from the Mantatee fires; and that what looked like ashes was in reality the black, naked bodies of the savages.

The Griqua chief and Mr. Moffat were riding, with a few attendants, at some distance before the soldiers. They saw a young woman gathering and eating fruit among some bushes, and went towards her. She was hungry, and they gave her food to please her, and make her feel that they were friends. When she had eaten enough, Mr. Moffat asked her to go to the Mantatees, and say to some of the chief men that the horsemen coming towards them wished to speak to them. While the woman was gone on this errand, Mr. Moffat sent another messenger back to the Griqua army to hasten them forward, and waited himself with the Griqua chief in sight of the Mantatee army, that they might know

the horsemen who wished to speak with them were not afraid of them.

Presently a few naked warriors came out from the vast host, and in a very threatening manner cast their spears at the little waiting company. They were not near enough to do any harm, it was only a threat; and Mr. Moffat, taking no notice of the spears, ventured to go closer to the savages. He wished very much, if possible, to make peace with them, and so prevent the battle, and bloodshed, and misery, which could be prevented in no other way.

His hopes were vain. No sooner did the savage warriors see that the horsemen were really within reach, than they raised a hideous yell, and several hundreds rushed furiously forwards, casting their spears and clubs as they came. The horses were frightened at the noise and sight, so that Mr. Moffat and the chief with difficulty managed to turn them, and gallop out of reach. The Mantatees did not follow, but returned to their camp.

Once more Mr. Moffat tried to get near enough to speak; but it was no use, the savages only tried to kill him again.

And now the battle, which could not be avoided, began. The Griqua soldiers came up, and fired upon the Mantatees. The savages did not understand the use of guns, but though they appeared astonished to see their companions fall dead by the means of this distant fire, they only yelled angrily, and snatched the arrows and spears from the hands of the dying men, to replace those they had thrown.

The timid Bechuanas attacked the Mantatees with their poisoned arrows, but were very soon overcome. Indeed, in spite of their fine speeches, a few Mantatee warriors made all the Bechuanas run away. They

certainly would have been all destroyed, had they ventured against these savages without the help of the Griqua soldiers.

What a scene that battlefield must have been! There were oxen bellowing, warriors shouting, dying men groaning in agony, women shrieking in alarm, children crying with fright. The Mantatees were at last put to flight, and the Griqua horsemen pursued them. The oxen, the wounded, the dying, and many of the women and children remained about the camping-place; and as soon as the warriors were gone, the cruel, cowardly Bechuanas returned. They returned to take what was left behind in the flight, to kill the wounded men and murder the women and children.

Seeing what was going on, Mr. Moffat galloped up, and tried to stop the plunderers in their wicked work. Many a wounded man raised himself from the ground to throw a spear or club at Mr. Moffat as he passed, but God preserved him from them all. At the risk of his own life, he saved a great many women and children from death that day.

It was very difficult to know what to do with the poor creatures when they were collected together, for they were all very frightened, and very hungry. They were all taken to Lattakoo and fed;—such kind treatment must have surprised them very much.

The Grikwas pursued the fleeing Mantatees for a long way, and then returned home, thinking the savages would be too much frightened to venture back, and too much scattered to attack any more towns. Numbers of women and children were still wandering about, and perishing from hunger. In order to rescue as many as possible, Mr. Hamilton and the missionary from Griqua went out to find them with a waggon, in which those

who could not walk could be brought safely to the station.

Two days after the missionaries started on their kind errand, Mr. Moffat heard, by report, that the Mantatees had returned, and were going to attack Lattakoo; for now that the Griquas with their lightning and thunder were gone, they knew the Bechuanas would not be able to fight against them.

Mr. Moffat at once sent two men after Mr. Hamilton to fetch him back, and sent a messenger with a letter to the Griqua chief, asking him to let the soldiers return.

In the course of the day some men arrived at Lattakoo, saying the Mantatees were certainly coming, and would be there that night. The people were extremely alarmed. Night came on; it was dark, no moon lighted the country to show them their enemies' approach. They expected that the town would be surrounded in the darkness, and the dawning light would be the signal for a yell, a rush, and a massacre.

Do you wonder no one lay down to sleep, but that the people sat cowering over their fires? Many men spent the night with their ears pressed against the ground, listening, for thus first they would catch the sound of the stealthy, soft footfalls.

They heard the roar of the wild beasts; they heard the lowing of their cattle, when startled in the fold; they heard the bark and howl of their dogs, roused and made uneasy by the unusual wakefulness; they heard the cry of the children, who awoke from their peaceful sleep; they heard their own beating hearts;—but no sound of the Mantatees. Strained ears and strained eyes all through that dark night were left in uncertainty, and every one seemed afraid to move.

Once a footfall was heard approaching. It was

followed by a loud wail of sorrow. A wanderer had found his way into the town, and had brought the news to a poor family that their father had been killed by the Mantatees.

Mrs. Moffat dressed her little children, and let them sleep, while she sat by their bedside praying. Mr. Moffat saw that his gun was prepared for use, put everything ready to save his wife and children, should an opportunity come; while all the time his heart was joining in his wife's prayers.

Sometimes he and his wife were startled by a loud knock at the door. It was only men who had groped their way to the house through the darkness, to tell the missionary of new sounds or new reports which had alarmed them.

The only creatures who did not seem frightened through that dreadful night were the Mantatee women that had been rescued by Mr. Moffat, and were lying about in his kitchen and outhouses.

The missionaries and their wives prayed much. They knew that God never sleeps, that through the darkness, as well as in the light, He watches and protects. This knowledge filled their hearts with peace, in spite of all their fears. The poor Bechuanas had no such comfort; they did not yet believe in a good and powerful God.

Morning dawned, and every one saw that the Mantatees were not yet round the town. What a relief! How thankful the missionaries were! Mr. Moffat could not bear that his wife and children should be exposed to the danger any longer, so he sent them to Griqua Town in a wagon. Mr. Hamilton returned to the mission station safely, bringing with him thirty more women and children. He had not seen any Mantatee

warriors, only great numbers of women, and many of them were already starved to death with their children.

The messenger returned from the Griqua chief to say the soldiers could not be sent back. He had heard that a party of Mantatees were on their way to attack Griqua Town, so that all his men would be needed at home. He advised the missionaries to come at once to Griqua Town, where at least they would be better defended than at Lattakoo.

Their wives and children were already gone, and Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton made up their minds to follow them. It was of but little use to remain where they were. The Bechuanas had many of them run away; and those who remained were too weak to resist an enemy, and too frightened to be taught anything. Lest the Mantatee women should be murdered by the Bechuanas, they also were taken to Griqua Town.

But neither Lattakoo nor Griqua Town were attacked by the Mantatees, and gradually the alarming reports and the fear of this savage tribe died away. The Bechuanas ventured back to their huts by degrees; the missionaries returned to their old home, and, as one result of all this trouble, found themselves treated with much more respect and kindness.





CHAPTER XII.

A BECHUANA CHIEF VISITS THE CAPE.

WHEN Mr. and Mrs. Moffat were once more settled at Lattakoo, they found that neither of them was so strong to work as they had been before this time of trouble. Mrs. Moffat, indeed, was very ill; and it seemed as though nothing but rest and change would make her well again. Mr. Moffat wished to visit the Cape, and such a visit would be the very thing to make his wife better. He resolved to go, and take her and the children, leaving the mission station in charge of Mr. Hamilton.

When Mothibi heard that Mr. Moffat intended taking this journey, he thought it would be a very good opportunity for his son to see the country of the white people. He therefore asked the missionary to take the young chief with him. This Mr. Moffat consented to do, and the young Bechuana chief, with a principal man who was sent as his guardian, left Lattakoo with Mr. Moffat. This was a great and exciting event. In those days the Bechuanas had never seen an English town, and the sea and ships they had never heard of, except from the missionaries.

The journey to the Cape, with the waggons, oxen, children, drivers, and the young chief and his attendant,

took two months. When at last Cape Town was reached, the visitors were very kindly received by the governor. The young chief and his companion were astonished and delighted with everything they saw. The houses and streets; the gardens and docks; the great restless, moving sea; the wonderful ships with their white sails in the bay;—all was so new and so strange.

It was with great difficulty the young chief could be persuaded to get into a boat, in order to be rowed to a ship lying in the harbour. It was not until Mr Moffat stepped in first, that he and his companion would venture. When hoisted on the deck of the ship, they were perfectly amazed at its size and the height of the mast. A sailor boy ran up the rigging to the mast-head, actively and quickly, as sailor boys know how. The Bechuanas were astonished, for at Lattakoo no one had learned to climb thus, and they asked, ‘Is it not an ape?’ They were taken into the cabins and looked down into the hold, which appeared to them so deep that they fancied its bottom must rest upon the bottom of the sea. They even thought that the ship was some strange kind of living animal, for they asked, ‘Do these water houses unyoke, like waggon oxen, every night? Do they feed in the sea? How do they live?’

A ship in full sail appeared in sight, rapidly coming into the harbour. Some one asked them, ‘What do you think of that?’ They answered, ‘We have no thoughts here, we hope to think again when we get back to the land.’

There was certainly plenty to think about, and the two months’ journey back to Lattakoo gave them plenty of time for thinking, and for asking questions about all they had seen and heard.

One thing they learned from this journey to the Cape was of use to the missionaries. They had learned that Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton were not living among them because they had no friends elsewhere. They thought, and told the Bechuanas, when they reached home, that the missionaries must be very much in earnest about doing them good, if they could leave such friends and comforts as they had at Cape Town, just for the sake of teaching the white man's religion to people who had not heard of Jesus the Saviour.





CHAPTER XIII.

MR. MOFFAT VISITS MAKABA.

NOT long after the journey to the Cape, the missionaries made up their minds to move their station out of Lattakoo, to a pleasanter spot near to the banks of the Kuruman river. Of course this move could not be made directly, because new houses had to be built first, and this took much time and labour. Mr. Moffat also had promised to visit Makaba; and now that peace was restored, Mr. Moffat wished to keep his promise.

A party of Griquas were going to hunt elephants, and as they intended to pass through Makaba's land, Mr. Moffat joined them. There were in all eleven waggons, one hundred and fifty oxen, a hundred men, and a good many horses—quite a caravan. There were no beaten roads over which to travel, so guides went with them to show the way.

Once the travellers foolishly thought themselves wiser than their guides. When night came on, it was usual for all the waggons to stop, and for the oxen to be unyoked. But one day no stream or pool had been passed on the way, and darkness overtook the caravan before the sight of water had gladdened the weary men and beasts. The guides, as usual, stopped, but the travellers thought it would be wiser to go on. The day had been very hot,

the night would be cooler ; besides, they would reach water so much sooner if they did not stop for the night.

‘ But,’ said the guides, ‘ you cannot see your way through the darkness ; you will not be able to keep straight on.’

Straight on ! Oh yes, they thought it was easy enough to keep straight on. And on they went, leaving the guides to follow when they chose.

The drivers of the first waggon must, of course, lead the way. Most of the other men laid themselves down in their waggons and went to sleep, leaving their oxen to plod on after the first waggon. It was a beautiful night, and there was no moon shining to dim the brightness of the stars. All the light was overhead ; the earth was very dark.

Mr. Moffat was riding on horseback, and presently he looked up at the sky, and began to think about the stars. But how was this ? The stars that were in front of them when they left the guides, were now on one side. Evidently they were not going straight, they were gradually turning round. Mr. Moffat rode on to the drivers of the first waggon, and, pointing to the stars, tried to convince them they were going in the wrong direction ; but the men were quite sure they were right, and would not stop.

At two o’clock in the morning the whole party halted. The oxen were unyoked, fires were lighted, and the men sat around eating their suppers, or lay down to sleep. By this time Mr. Moffat knew by the stars that they had been going back, instead of forwards, for two hours. Mr. Moffat put some coffee into a pot, and while it was boiling on the fire he took out his compass. He tried to explain it to his companions, and, by the light of the fire, showed them the little needle which pointed north and south. If the compass was right, no doubt they were wrong. But it is hard to convince some people that they are wrong. The men only shook their heads at

Mr. Moffat and his compass. 'The little thing,' they said, 'may know its way in its own country; but how can it know the way here? It is not telling the truth.'

Mr. Moffat put the compass away, and, taking the pot from the fire, began his supper. Before he had finished, the moon began to rise; but it was on the side upon which no one but he expected to see it.

'What a fire!' exclaimed some one.

'It is the moon,' answered Mr. Moffat.

All started to their feet. 'The moon cannot rise on that side of the world,' they said.

One old man said very respectfully, 'Mosheté, your head is turned; the moon never rose in the west in my lifetime.'

'It is the moon,' repeated Mr. Moffat. But no one believed him, and they again went on eating. Presently the moon appeared above the horizon. Once more they all jumped up.

'What is it?' they exclaimed.

But the old man who had told Mr. Moffat his head was turned knew what it was, and answered, 'The moon has, for once, risen on the wrong side of the world.'

In a few hours the sun also rose, and, by the light he threw around, showed plainly that the men were wrong, and the moon was right.

This night-travelling proved a great hindrance. The oxen, when unyoked, had walked back until they reached the water they had left the day before; and a whole day had to be spent in going after them and bringing them back.

The guides, who had not thought themselves able to see in the dark, laughed heartily when they found the travellers had been going backwards instead of forwards.

Among the Griquas in this party were some really good Christian men. On Sundays they were glad to rest, and enjoyed singing hymns, and praying, and reading God's Word with Mr. Moffat. At last the caravan

outspanned just outside Makaba's land. Mr. Moffat hoped to spend a quiet Sunday before he and the other travellers presented themselves to the chief. But on the Sunday morning it was discovered that a great many of the oxen had strayed. It was necessary they should be found at once, so some of the men spent their Sunday morning in looking for the animals.

At noon the men returned to the waggons with the alarming news that the cattle had been seized by Makaba's men, and one ox was already killed. This made the whole party very anxious. Would Makaba restore the oxen? Would he seize all? What would happen? In the evening their fears were set at rest. Two men appeared, driving before them six of the missing oxen, and carrying part of the one that had been killed. They said that the others should be brought back as soon as possible; but the cattle had been separated and sent to different places before it was known to whom they belonged, so that it would take some time to collect them.

The reason why the men had brought these six back so quickly, was because they believed Makaba would kill them, if he knew they had stolen and killed oxen belonging to the white man who was come to visit him. Mr. Moffat assured them that if the chief was very angry with them, he would beg that they might not be punished.

There were still enough oxen to draw the waggons to Makaba's town. On Monday morning eight were yoked into each waggon, and the travellers started once more, still feeling not quite sure how the chief would receive them.

On the way, Maroga, one of Makaba's sons, marching at the head of a number of warriors, came to meet his father's visitors and welcome them. He presented Mr. Moffat with a bowl of milk, and then made a speech. 'We are terrified at your presence,' he said, 'because of

the harm we have done you. Your oxen shall be restored, not one shall be lost. I have ordered the thieves to be sent to the town. They shall be torn in pieces before your eyes. Makaba will not pardon them, for he has long expected you.'

Mr. Moffat said they must hurry on, lest the chief should tear the poor men in pieces before he arrived to ask that their lives might be spared.

Maroga and his wife rode back to the town in Mr. Moffat's waggon, and were very much pleased and amused, for they never before had ridden in anything. Maroga's wife knew Mr. Moffat, and was not afraid of him; she had been the wife of the rainmaker who had stayed so long at Lattakoo, and who had afterwards been killed by the order of Makaba.

As the waggons approached the town, they passed by numbers of women working in their gardens. The women, who never in their lives had seen such a sight, threw down their hoes, and ran to stare at the 'moving houses,' making, as they gazed, shrill cries, and loud exclamations of surprise.

Mr. Moffat and some of his companions mounted their horses, and set off at a quicker pace than the oxen could move. From the top of the hill overlooking Makaba's town, they were surprised to see a wide plain before them, sprinkled over with strange-looking villages. It was to Kuakue, the largest of these villages, they were going.

A guide showed them the way, and conducted them up a narrow, winding street to the chief's huts. He was standing at the entrance to one of them, to receive and welcome his visitors. It pleased him much to see they had ventured into the town without swords or guns; and he laughed heartily as he told them he was surprised they could trust themselves at all in the town of such a wicked man as people had told them he was.

What Makaba said was hardly heard for the noise around. Crowds of people had come to stare, and wonder at the horses and their riders. Such creatures had never been seen there before; and now the people were pushing, and shouting, and jumping, until they actually pushed each other down in their eagerness to get nearer.

Makaba went into his house, and sent out some servants with a pot of his own beer and some drinking-cups. These drinking-cups were not made of skulls, but Mr. Moffat had heard that Makaba always used skulls for cups.

By this time the waggons had reached the town, and the drivers had stopped outside. But the chief wished them to come on and drive the waggons and oxen through the streets of his town, for no waggons had ever been there before. No; and the streets had evidently not been made for carriages of any kind. Even the best one was so narrow and so winding that these big waggons could not be drawn through without doing a great deal of damage. Mr. Moffat pointed this out to Makaba, and reminded him how the fences round the huts, and even the huts themselves, would be broken down.

‘Never mind that,’ said Makaba; ‘only let me see the waggons go through the town.’

The chief would have his way. The heavy waggons, in long procession, forced a way for themselves up the narrow road, crushing the fences, and breaking down any unfortunate huts that stood in their path. Makaba stood on a mound near his own huts, and watched them with great delight. He did not at all mind how much harm was done by the oxen and waggons. It was the women, who would have to mend all the broken fences and huts, who had reason to complain.

At the other end of the town the oxen were unyoked, while thousands of people crowded round to see what was

to be seen. They made a deafening noise by way of showing their delight and surprise; not until nightfall did they begin to go away, and then they went to their homes only because they could no longer see.

Two days afterwards, Makaba went to the place at which the waggons and his visitors were encamped. As soon as the chief and his attendants were seen approaching, the people, who were moving about with their curiosity still unsatisfied, moved away, to show their respect for the great man. Every one remained perfectly silent until the chief spoke.

‘My friends,’ he said, ‘I am perfectly happy; my heart is whiter than milk, because you have visited me. To-day I am a great man. Men will say the white men are my friends.’

Mr. Moffat, in answering this polite speech, reminded Makaba why he had come all the way from Lattakoo. He wished the chief, he said, to be counted one of the friends of the white people, and he wished him to permit a missionary to come and dwell with him and his people.

‘I hope,’ replied the chief, ‘that from this time so many people will come and go, that no grass may grow on the road between Kuruman river and Kuakue. Mothibi will hinder you if he can; he is afraid of losing you, he does not wish you to build your house with me.’

Makaba also told Mr. Moffat that the oxen should be brought back that day, and that he would forgive the thieves because Mosheté wished him to do so.

Mr. Moffat presented Makaba with some beads and buttons, and also with a hat. The chief put the hat upon his head as he was told to do; but this did not satisfy him. He could not see the hat there over his eyes, so he quickly took it off again, and placed it upon

the head of one of his servants, where he could enjoy the sight of his new treasure.

Kuakue, Makaba's town, was in many things very different to Mothibi's town, Lattakoo. It was clean, for one thing. The women kept their yards and hut floors nice. The town was also larger; and Makaba's many wives had each three or four huts, besides a cornhouse and a storehouse.

Makaba usually spent his mornings talking to his chief men, cutting up skins to make karosses, and drinking. The drinking, unfortunately, was what he liked best, and by the afternoon he was not often sober enough to attend to anything. This was very sad; and what would the people do when their chief set them so bad an example? Mr. Moffat did not forget to speak to Makaba of the great and holy God, and told him the story of our Saviour's life and death on earth for our salvation, over and over again; but he never paid the least attention.

On the Sunday, Mr. Moffat paid a visit to the chief at his huts, praying to God as he walked along that he might say something Makaba would remember and think about. He found the chief sitting in the midst of his attendants, busy with his knife and a jackal's skin. Mr. Moffat sat down and said he had some news to tell. Makaba looked pleased; he was fond of hearing news, and thought he should hear some stories about hunting or fighting, of towns burned, and people killed, or carried away for slaves. But when the missionary began to speak of a king who had been born among the cattle; who had been all his life poor and despised; who had spent his days in doing kind actions and speaking holy words; the chief was not at all interested. He would not listen, but began to hum a war-song.

One of the men sitting by, however, was listening; and

when he heard how Jesus raised the dead, he exclaimed, 'What a great medicine man he must have been, to make dead men live!'

Mr. Moffat went on to say that a day was coming when all the people who were in their graves would hear the voice of Jesus, and would come out. Makaba happened to hear this.

'What!' he exclaimed; 'the dead, the dead arise!'

'Yes,' replied Mr. Moffat, 'all the dead shall rise.'

'Will my father rise?'

'Yes, your father will rise.'

'Will all the slain in battle rise?'

'Yes.'

'And will all that have been killed and eaten by lions, tigers, hyenas, and crocodiles, arise?'

'Yes.'

He looked at Mr. Moffat, and then, turning to the people, said in a loud voice,—

'Hark, ye wise men, ye old men; did ever your ears hear such strange news? Mosheté tells us the dead shall live again.'

Then the chief laid his hand on Mr. Moffat's breast and spoke to him.

'Father, I love you much,' he said. 'The words of your mouth are sweeter than honey; but the words of the rising again are too great to be heard. I do not wish to hear of the dead living again. The dead cannot rise. The dead must not rise.'

'Why,' asked Mr. Moffat, 'can so great a man as you refuse knowledge? Why must I not speak of the rising again?'

Makaba rose from the ground, and, uncovering his strong right arm, replied, 'I have slain my thousands, and shall they rise?'

He was afraid to meet the men he had killed; he had killed thousands. No wonder he did not want them all to live again.

Makaba appeared to be very fond of Mr. Moffat, and called him 'the stranger's friend.' This surprised the missionary, and one day he asked the chief for what reason he called him by such a name. Makaba told him a story which explained why he was so fond of his visitor. Part of the story Mr. Moffat knew before.

This is the story.

One of Makaba's sons had been a very wicked young man. He had wished, some years before, to make himself chief, and did all in his power to gain the favour of his father's subjects, in hopes that they would ask him to rule over them. This did not succeed, but the young man was so resolved to be chief, that he tried to kill his father. He dug a hole in a path over which his father often walked; in this pit he had sharp stakes fastened, and then he had the top covered in so lightly, that any one walking upon it would fall through upon the stakes. This kind of hole is often made to entrap wild animals. Here he hoped his father would fall in and be killed. But the hole was discovered, and, to escape being punished, and perhaps killed, the young man, with some of his companions, ran away.

He went as far as to Lattakoo, and told Mothibi long stories of his father's wickedness and unkindness. These tales he told also to Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton. They replied that it was not possible to believe what he said; that he was very wicked himself, and would certainly be punished for rebelling against his father.

Now, among the young men's followers were some men who were really Makaba's friends. They had gone with his son, and pretended to be his son's friends, on

purpose that they might let the chief know all he did. These men told Makaba what the missionaries had said.

Makaba's son was punished. Mothibi would not help him to fight against his father, as he had hoped. Still, he succeeded in collecting enough men to attack his father, and there was a battle between them.

Makaba still loved his undutiful son so much, that he gave particular directions to his warriors not to kill him. The young man was, however, slain in the battle, and his father's grief was great.

It was because of the good advice given to his son by the missionaries, that Makaba now called Mr. Moffat 'the stranger's friend.'

Does not this story remind you of another which you have read in your Bible? A story of a king, very different to Makaba, who had a rebellious son, and when he was killed in battle, the old king cried, 'O Absalom, my son, my son!'

The time at length arrived for leaving Kuakue. The Griquas prepared for a grand hunting expedition, and Mr. Moffat was intending to return to Lattakoo almost alone. No one knew that there was any danger in his path; but God saw that if Mr. Moffat went alone he would be killed.

See how God cares for those who love and fear Him. He put it into the heart of one of the Griqua chiefs to return home at once, with the ivory he had already procured. To Mr. Moffat's surprise, this chief, Berend, returned to him with his eight waggons and all his men. Berend could not tell why he had so suddenly changed his plan; he only knew that the thought had come into his heart to return with Mr. Moffat.

Their way led them to a place called Pitsan. All unconscious of danger, they went on their way, and reached the town in safety. But here a large party of

Mantatees attacked them and the town. The people of the town fled, for they dared not fight. And now, if Mr. Moffat had been alone, what would have happened? He could not have overcome these savage warriors, but with the help of Berend and his brave men, they were defeated and driven away.

Mr. Moffat was safe, but his wife at Lattakoo had been dreadfully alarmed. She had almost given up all hope of seeing her husband any more, just at the time that God had so kindly provided for him.

One day, when she knew that Mr. Moffat was on his way home, she heard that once more the Mantatees intended to attack Lattakoo, and that they were almost close to the town already. It was evening. Mrs. Moffat, having put her children to bed, knelt down to ask God to take care of them, her husband, herself, and all the people in the town; and then she lay down with her little ones and fell asleep.

At midnight she was awakened by a loud knocking at the house door. In great alarm she jumped up to see what was the matter. The chief, Mothibi, was outside, and as soon as the door was opened he came in with so many men that the room was quite full.

‘The Mantatees are almost here,’ said the chief.

Mrs. Moffat lighted a lamp, took out her paper and pen, and sat down without waiting to dress, to write a note to Mr. Hamilton, who was away attending to the building at the new station. She asked him to come over to Lattakoo immediately. A messenger went with the letter, and quite early in the morning Mr. Hamilton arrived. But what could he do? All the people were preparing to run away, for they continually heard from men who came into the town fresh tidings of the enemy which frightened them.

By and by news came that the Mantatees had turned away from Lattakoo and were going to Pitsan. Oh, happy relief! Every heart in the town rejoiced. No, not every one—all but one. Until now Mrs. Moffat had been anxious for herself and the children; now her heart sank as she thought of her husband. She knew that the plan had been for him to return alone, and that if his journey had prospered he would just then be at Pitsan. The Mantatees would kill him.

Mr. Moffat was at Pitsan, and while his wife was praying to God for his life and safe return, God had already heard her prayers, and was guiding him home. Far away at Lattakoo, however, she did not know he was safe, and for three weeks Mrs. Moffat was full of fear and uncertainty. People often came to the house to say that her husband was killed. Various were the reports they brought. One man said he had seen a piece of Mosheté's broken waggon; another said he had picked up pieces of the white teacher's clothes all stained with blood; a third declared he had found part of his horse's saddle. They did not bring the clothes, nor the saddle, nor the wood to Mrs. Moffat; but do you wonder she thought that she and the children would never see their dear husband and father again?

At last the waggon, the horse, the saddle, and Mr. Moffat himself appeared in the town, all safe and sound. What a happy meeting there was in that mission-house! Husband, wife, and children had all been in danger; but they were together once more, all safe and well. Their great Father had watched over them all. How they thanked Him in their prayers, and asked Him never to let them forget this instance of His power and His love!



CHAPTER XIV.

THIEVES, TROUBLES, AND LOCUSTS.

IT really seemed that the missionaries were never to enjoy peace and quiet among the Bechuanas. The Mantatees were gone, and they hoped war was at an end, and that the buildings at the Kuruman Fountain, for the new station, would get on fast. But no; a war broke out among the different tribes in Bechuana, and the missionaries were sorely tried by it.

One consequence of this war was that robbers were continually stealing the cattle. Two bold thieves came down from the hills one day, murdered the man who had charge of the missionaries' cattle, and took away an ox. Another time all the calves disappeared from the fold.

One of the men who stole the calves was caught. Every one was glad to see this man brought back to the town a prisoner, and it was very quickly decided that he deserved to be killed. But the missionaries, though they felt he ought to be punished, did not wish him to be hurt very much.

He was whipped; and when Mr. Moffat thought he had been whipped enough, a young man was sent towards him, with a gun in his hand. The young man



KURUMAN.

stood still as though to fire ; the prisoner saw him, and with one sudden bound, was free and away. The gun was fired after him ; but, as there was only powder in it, it did no more than make a noise, which made him run the faster. It had been fired on purpose to frighten him away.

This thief took refuge in a village not far from Lattakoo. Here he lived for some time, and used to boast that he could run faster than the white man's bullet. Some one who knew the secret at last told him there was no bullet in the gun.

This new idea made him think. 'These white people must be better than others,' thought he. 'They only whipped me a little, and frightened me, when I stole their calves. My own people would have killed me.'

His thoughts ended in his going to the new mission station at Kuruman, and asking for work. He was employed there as a labourer ; and at last, through the grace of God, became an intelligent, industrious, loving Christian man. But this was long afterwards ; at this time he was, as you have heard, a desperate thief.

While the new station at Kuruman was being built, Peclu, the young chief who had visited the Cape with Mr. Moffat, died. This was a great grief to Mothibi and the young man's mother. The missionaries, too, were grieved ; for they had hoped that he would one day become a Christian, and help them very much. But he died, and his father and mother believed that some one must have bewitched and so killed him.

This is a very common belief among the heathen of Africa. If any one dies, they think the dead person has been made ill by some witch, and the witch must be found and killed.

The first thing was to find out who had bewitched

Peclu, and the chief and medicine-men decided it must have been done by his wife's relatives. Happily, these relatives of his wife heard that they were suspected, and ran away from Lattakoo in order to save their lives.

Now that their dear son was dead, Mothibi and his wife hated the very thought of the grave in which his body was buried. They could not even bear the sight of the paths over which he had walked, nor of the house in which he had lived. They had no hope of ever seeing him again, as Christians have when their friends die, and so they had no comfort.

This grief made the chief all the more ready to leave the place where he had lived with his son, and move away nearer to the Kuruman Fountain, and nearer to the new mission station which was being built there.

The years of drought at length ended with a plentiful rain, which cheered the hearts of the poor people and their missionaries.

The Bechuanas had been in very great distress, for the cattle, which they had with great difficulty kept alive during the drought, were stolen from them during the wars. Now grass sprang up with wonderful quickness, and corn and vegetables and grains grew again.

This year, however, the Bechuanas were not to eat them. Vast swarms of locusts, like those we read of as one of the plagues of Egypt, came like a great cloud over the land. They darkened the air, and filled it with the noise of their flight. They came down upon the ground, settling thickly upon every herb, and leaf, and branch, and stem, until every green thing was eaten up by them.

Wherever a swarm of locusts settles, beasts of many kinds follow to eat them. Serpents, lizards, frogs, kites, vultures, crows, and locust-birds feast upon them. Yet

in such multitudes do these little creatures come, that the numbers devoured do not seem to make those remaining any fewer.

The grass and grain were quite destroyed, but the Bechuanas did not starve. They had a change of food. As fast as they could they swept up the locusts; by millions and millions they collected them. They boiled them in pots, and then spread them out to dry in the sun. They cleared off the legs and wings, and put the little dried bodies into bags, or laid them up in heaps upon the floors of their huts.

The locusts had destroyed one kind of food, but they themselves made the poor Bechuanas fat. The people feasted upon their little enemies, and enjoyed the feast heartily. They had grown too hungry to be very dainty about their food.





CHAPTER XV.

MR. MOFFAT AMONG LIONS AND BAROLONGS.



THE missionaries removed to the new station, now called Kuruman, as soon as their houses were built. Many of the natives had already built their huts near, and many more came to live there when the missionaries moved.

Mr. Moffat did not feel he had yet learned the language of the Bechuana people perfectly, and he saw it was very important that he should know it as well as the people themselves, and even better. He wished to translate the Bible into their own language for them, for he believed a time was coming when they would wish to have God's Word, and to read it for themselves. He had already written a spelling-book in Sechuana (that is the name of the Bechuana language), and this spelling-book was used by the children who came to school, after it was printed at the Cape.

A child's spelling-book does not, of course, contain as much of a language as a man needs to know, and in order to learn as much and as quickly as possible, Mr. Moffat resolved to go away for a while from his wife, who talked English to him, and hear only Sechuana.

So once more this earnest missionary yoked the oxen into the waggon, said 'good-bye' to his wife and children,

and left his pleasant home at Kuruman, with its loved and loving treasures. He took no one with him, except a boy to help drive the oxen, and two men who were going home to Pitsan.

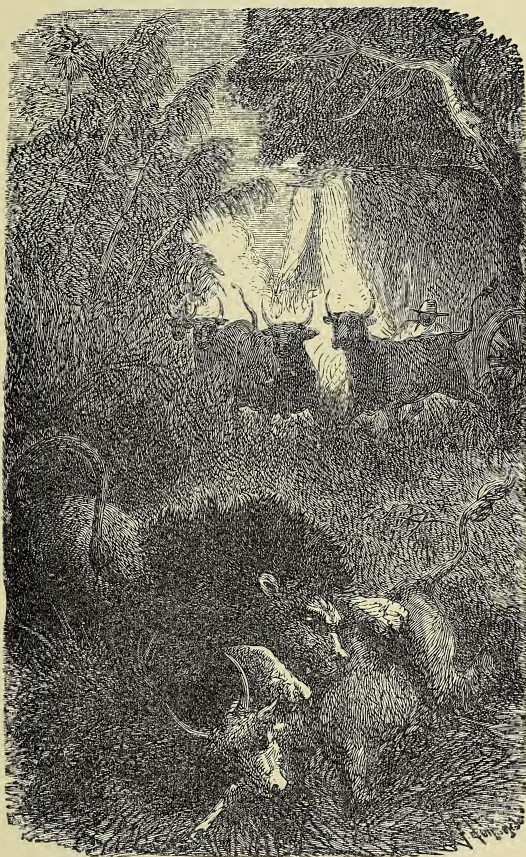
On the third day of their journey, at evening, they halted near a pool. It was already almost dark. The oxen were unyoked, and a fire was made. Mr. Moffat and the two men each took a burning stick from the fire, and groped their way to the pool. They wanted to find out what kind of wild animals were near, by looking for their footprints. To their dismay, they found a great many tracks of lions. They went quickly back, collected the oxen, and tied them to the waggon, and close to the fire, as strongly as possible. The men had brought with them a young cow. Mr. Moffat advised them to fasten her up also, but they thought it was not necessary, and said she would be too wise to leave the oxen and the waggon. So they left the cow loose, and sat down around the fire to eat their suppers.

After supper Mr. Moffat sang a hymn and prayed to God, asking Him to preserve them from the lions, for He could see as well in the night as in the day. How different were the sweet sounds of singing and prayer to the sounds of the roaring lions, who might be heard there night after night!

The men were already asleep, and the missionary was just getting ready to lie down, when suddenly all the oxen started to their feet. Then came a roar, a bound, a bellow, a growl; then all these sounds were mingling together, but the bellowings were farther and farther off. Something was being dragged away.

The frightened men, wide awake now, stood up and listened; but in the darkness they could see nothing. Evidently the cow had been seized by a lion, and at a

little distance they could hear the poor animal's bellowings, the tearing of her flesh, and the breaking of her bones, as the lion devoured her.



LION'S ATTACK ON A MISSIONARY ENCAMPMENT.

As soon as the cow had ceased bellowing, Mr. Moffat fired again and again in the direction in which he heard

the lion. Each time the gun was fired the lion rushed at the waggon and frightened the oxen dreadfully; but as he always returned to his prey, Mr. Moffat at last gave up trying to drive him away.

The fire was getting low, and, with such cruel creatures about, it would not be safe to let it go out. More wood must be collected. The lion was still busy with the cow, so Mr. Moffat and one of the men ventured to creep quietly towards the water to gather the wood which had been broken from the bushes by the animals coming to drink.

Mr. Moffat had not gone far, when, lifting up his eyes, he dimly saw before him the outlines of four animals. He listened. What was that sound? Mr. Moffat felt his heart beat hard. It was a roar. The four animals before him were lions. Very, very quietly, he crept back on his hands and knees towards his companions, to warn them of their danger. He found the man coming back from the other side of the pool, also very much frightened, for on that side of the water he had seen two lions and a cub. There was one lion eating the cow, four lions on one side of the pool, and two lions and a cub on the other side. In all there were eight lions round them in that dark night.

The terrified men reached the waggon safely, and there remained for the rest of the night in great fear. The fire grew less and less, until all light from it was gone. The lions were prowling about, roaring savagely. Sometimes they went near the one who was feasting upon the cow. They were not at all welcomed there; for, whenever they attempted to approach, the lion growled and drove them away. All night long he went on by himself tearing the flesh and crunching the bones, but as soon as day began to dawn he dragged away what he

had not eaten, and all the lions lay down in their lairs to sleep.

After a while Mr. Moffat reached the village at which he intended to remain, and here he stayed for ten weeks. The village was very dirty, and so were the people; but as the missionary's object was to learn as much as possible of their language, and to understand their manners and customs and way of thinking, he was obliged to put up with the dirt. He used to join the men when they sat together talking and preparing their skins in the large *khotla*, or fold. Here he talked to them as much as possible, and did not mind although they used to laugh a great deal at the queer mistakes he often made.

While himself learning their language, he tried also to teach them about God's Word—the Word which is our Saviour Jesus Christ. At night Mr. Moffat would try to write down what he had learned of the language during the day. He had to invent the spelling and the grammar as he wrote; for the Bechuanas had no written language.

The weather was so hot and the flies were so thirsty that they clustered into the inkstand to drink the ink, and followed the pen as it travelled over the paper, to suck up the fluid. This, perhaps, would not have been a very great difficulty if there had been only a few flies, but there were so many, that sometimes, in swarming round, so many flew into the candle that they put it out. We in England can hardly understand such difficulties in the way of writing exercises.

While dwelling among these people, Mr. Moffat saw a good deal of their manners and customs, which interested him very much. Some of the young men were very swift runners. Two giraffes one day wandered near the village,

and some of the young men, for amusement, pursued them, running on foot, and actually succeeded in overtaking and killing one of the animals. Such a feat as this was not common, and the men were justly proud of what they had done.

Not long after Mr. Moffat came to this village, some visitors arrived to see him. They were people from Kuakue. Makaba was dead, and his son Sebeque was now their chief. They begged the missionary to go back with them and visit their new chief. Mr. Moffat told them he could not visit Sebeque at present, but he sent him a kind message and some gifts, to show his good-will.

A fortnight passed away; Mr. Moffat was one day sitting in his waggon writing as well as he could, when he heard a cry of dismay from the village, 'An enemy, an enemy is coming.' The missionary looked out from his waggon. There certainly were a number of warriors approaching. The frightened people were running away in the opposite direction, and hiding wherever they could find shelter. Mr. Moffat did not like to run away and leave his waggon, and everything he had with him, so he waited to see who the enemy was. This was rather courageous, but then Mr. Moffat was no coward.

The men were friends from Kuakue. Sebeque himself was at their head on horseback. As Mosheté could not come to see him, he had come to see Mosheté. The horse he was riding had been bought on purpose for this journey; and a second horse he had with him he had stolen, that he might come to the missionary like a very great chief.

He had also had a pair of trousers made which he was wearing, because he knew Mr. Moffat thought it proper to wear them. There were no tailors at Kuakue, and these trousers were cut out so strangely that Sebeque was

not quite satisfied with them, and begged Mr. Moffat to give him a better pair. Sebeque remained with Mr. Moffat two days. His last words to Mr. Moffat were, 'Trust me as you have trusted my father.'

Mr. Moffat perfected himself in the language very much while he remained at this village, and returned to Kuruman in safety. Very soon after he reached home, he heard that a real enemy had come against the place at which he had been staying; robbers had attacked it; the huts were destroyed, and the people all scattered.





CHAPTER XVI.

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.



CHANGE was coming over the Bechuanas at Kuruman. They were beginning to improve. The missionaries did not yet think that any of them were really seeking God ; but thousands of people had built their huts near, and more people came to the little chapel to hear what their teachers had to say. The people who went to the chapel really seemed to be listening, and more children came to school.

Just as Mr. Moffat was hoping that still brighter days were going to dawn, news reached them that a large band of robbers was going to attack the station, and murder every one. The Bechuanas were so alarmed that they set their huts on fire and ran away. The missionaries, too, thought it wise once more to take refuge in Griqua Town. But when they had done so, Mr. Moffat so much regretted having left his post that he made up his mind never more to be frightened away, whatever happened. He and Mr. Hamilton soon went back to Kuruman. The people were scattered, and where their huts had stood nothing was to be seen but heaps of ashes. The missionaries' houses had not been burnt down with the huts, but most of their oxen and cows were dead, their gardens had run wild, and for some time it was very

difficult to procure food for themselves and their children.

The people, however, soon gathered together when they found their teachers had returned, and new huts were quickly built. The new spelling-books, too, arrived just then from the Cape, and the school children were delighted to have books from which to learn. Mr. Moffat wrote three hymns in the Sechuana language, and the people liked singing them in the chapel, though they did not understand much about time and tune.

Long had the missionaries prayed that God would open the hearts of these poor Bechuanas, and by His Holy Spirit teach them the knowledge of 'the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.' They had waited for an answer to these prayers, and now, when they had almost given up expecting an answer, it came.

The missionaries were surprised to see, while they prayed and taught in the chapel, that some of the people were weeping. Large tears rolled down their cheeks as they were told of their Almighty Saviour's love. Even the men cried like children—men who had been taught it was a disgrace to shed a tear. A runaway slave, named Aaron, had come to Kuruman with his children, that they might be taught to read in the mission school. This man became a Christian. He gave his heart to Jesus, and resolved to be Christ's servant for the rest of his life. He had run away from one master, but now he gave himself willingly to another—to the Master that had loved him so well that He had died to set him free. Aaron wished to be baptized, and asked Mr. Moffat to baptize him and his children. Mr. Moffat felt that Aaron was in earnest, and did as he desired.

This man was the first who declared himself to be a Christian, but from many a hut now might be heard the

sounds of prayer and hymn-singing. So many were wishing to be taught, that the little room which had been used as a chapel was not big enough to hold them. Aaron and two other men came to the missionaries and offered to get a new building put up which would do both for chapel and schoolroom. This offer was thankfully accepted, and the work was begun in such good earnest that it was very soon finished. The women were not required to do the building now, but they and the children carried clay, and laths, and straw, and whatever the men who were building needed.

How glad the missionaries must have been to see this change! It was now thirteen years since Mr. Hamilton first went to Lattakoo. All those years he had suffered and waited, hoped and prayed. It was a long waiting time, but now he and Mr. Moffat felt fully repaid for all the pain and anxiety, for all the hunger and thirst and rough treatment which they had endured.

The Bechuanas were crying out to God, 'We have been like beasts before Thee! What shall we do to be saved?' How delightful now to point them to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Other changes soon followed. The people found out that decent clothes and a good wash were pleasant and comfortable. The women asked Mrs. Moffat to teach them to make clothes; and rough fingers, which had been used to handling only large poles or awkward gardening hoes, now tried to hold a needle. The women and girls at first could hardly feel the little things; but they persevered, and in time found they could sew.

There was another difficulty in the way of making clothes. What were they to be made of? No one had ever dreamed of such a thing as a draper's shop at Kuruman, for no one had wanted better clothes than a

skin—except, indeed, the missionaries, and they had been obliged to get their clothes from the Cape when they could, and often had found it very difficult to keep neat. Many skins were cut up now and made into jackets, trousers, and gowns; and when a trader came with coloured calicoes, as they sometimes did, there were plenty of people ready to bargain with him.

If you could have been at the mission station about this time, you would have enjoyed many a good laugh at the odd dresses to be seen. Sometimes a man would be walking about in a jacket with only one sleeve. The other sleeve was not yet finished, or perhaps there was nothing of which to make it. Or sometimes a man would come to the chapel in a leathern jacket with cotton sleeves of different colours,—one pink and one blue, or one red and the other yellow. These oddities amused the missionaries, but it showed that the people were improving, or they would not care to dress at all.

The next improvements were in the huts; such fine dresses required cleaner houses. The grease with which the people used to smear themselves was now carefully saved and made into a kind of candle. Some of the people were learning to read, and they found that they could both read and sew after sunlight had left them, if they had candles.

Mr. Moffat was translating the Gospel of Luke and some Bible lessons into Sechuana. He made all haste to finish them and send them to the Cape to be printed, that those who wished might read the story of Jesus Christ in their own tongue.



CHAPTER XVII.

KING MOSELEKATSE AND HIS AMBASSADORS.

JUST when all these changes were taking place, two ambassadors arrived at the Kuruman station from the great king Mo-se-le-kat-se, who reigned over the Matabele. This king had heard of the white men, and especially of the white men at Kuruman, and had sent these ambassadors to learn more about them, their manners and customs, and what they taught.

He had chosen two of his chief nobles to go on this errand, but although they were nobles, they arrived at the mission station without any clothes on. The Bechuanas were shocked, for though their ideas were not very elevated, they now thought dress of some kind quite necessary. To oblige the Bechuanas and their teachers, the visitors put on some clothes which were provided for them, and as they were not used to being covered, and must have felt uncomfortable in things which certainly did not fit them well, this was very kind of them.

The ambassadors were very much astonished at everything they saw. The missionaries' houses and gardens, the long two-mile watercourse, through which the water flowed from the river to the gardens; the well-built

walls ; and, above all, the smith-shop and forge, so amazed them, that they did not know how to express their feelings. They did not dance about nor shout, but remained grave, and behaved as though full of respect for the missionaries.

‘ You are men,’ they said ; ‘ we are children. Moselekatse must be taught these things.’

The furniture in Mr. Moffat’s house surprised them very much. One caught sight of a little looking-glass, which he greatly admired. Mrs. Moffat handed him a larger one. He looked, and saw a reflection of his own face. But, never before having seen a likeness of himself, he thought one of his servants had got behind the glass, and told him to be gone. Of course, as no servant was there, no one obeyed the order ; and when the ambassador found this was the case, he once more, but very cautiously, looked at himself, and then returned the glass to Mrs. Moffat, saying, with a very grave face,—

‘ It is a deceiver, I cannot trust it.’

The ambassadors went to the chapel with the missionaries, and there they were more astonished than ever. The people no longer behaved as they used to do. There were men and women sitting decently and attentively ; there were children who made no noise ; there were babies who were quickly hushed or carried out if they cried.

What was the cause of such order ? How could songs which were not war-songs please the people ? Whom were they talking to when they knelt down ? What was the teacher talking to them about when he went on speaking to them so long ? Mr. Moffat tried to explain to his visitors the good news of Jesus’ love, and told them that the people had met to worship God and learn about Him.

One day the ambassadors entered Mr. Moffat's house with very grave and anxious looks, and asked to speak with him alone. Mr. Moffat wondered what secret he was going to hear, and quickly sent every one away. This was the secret—the ambassadors were in great difficulty, they said, for some of the Bechuana tribes dwelling between Kuruman and Moselekatse's territory had determined to murder them on their way home. Mr. Moffat was very much perplexed as to what was best to be done. He knew that if the ambassadors were alone, the savage, thoughtless Bechuanas would very likely murder them. He knew that if they were murdered, Moselekatse would come and destroy the offending tribes, for he was a great warrior, and had large armies.

The only way seemed to be for Mr. Moffat and a guard of men to go with them as far on their journey as there was any fear of an attack. So waggons and oxen and a strong guard were prepared, which conveyed Mr. Moffat and the ambassadors past the tribes who had threatened to kill them.

But when Mr. Moffat thought of returning home, the ambassadors would not hear of it. They said that, since the missionary had been so kind to them, they wished to present him to their king; if he really loved them, he would go on with them. Mr. Moffat wished much to return home, but at last he consented to go with them to the outposts of Moselekatse's country, where they would be quite safe.

The country through which they now passed is very different from that around Kuruman. The land is better watered, there are hills, and rivers, and trees in abundance. When Mr. Moffat passed through it, everything looked fresh and green, for it was the rainy season. Clumps of large and beautiful trees cast a delightful

shade upon the green pastures, where animals of many kinds were grazing.

These pleasant lands were, however, spoilt, for scattered over them were to be seen many ruined towns, destroyed by the armies of the Mantatees and of the Matabele. Among these sad ruins lions roamed about in great numbers, lions even more dangerous than they are generally, for they had learned to enjoy human flesh, in consequence of having lived near such a man as Moselekatse.

You have not heard anything bad of this king before. His ambassadors had not behaved like the servants of a very cruel king, but very cruel he was, and even the lions were the worse for being near him. Close to the outposts of Moselekatse's kingdom, Mr. Moffat noticed a tree which appeared to have some very large and strange-looking nests in it. They looked like huts, but birds could not build huts. Mr. Moffat climbed up the tree to get a nearer view. The nests really were huts, and there, at the entrance to one of them, was a woman nursing a baby. What a queer little kraal built in a tree! And what a large tree to bear so many huts, and so many people! Mr. Moffat counted] seventeen huts, and saw a good many women and children. The men were out hunting.

‘Why did they live up there?’ you ask. ‘Why did they not build their huts on the ground, where the children could run about without fear of falling?’

The tree people belonged to a tribe which had been conquered by Moselekatse, and these were all that had escaped alive. The wild beasts had feasted upon the dead bodies of their companions, and would quickly devour them too, if they remained on the ground. The children were safer crawling about the branches of the

great tree, and eating roots and locusts that were brought to them, than they would have been if their mothers had been hoeing gardens below, and trying to supply them with cow's milk. The lions and hyenas could not reach them in the tree. Sometimes they had a feast upon game caught by the men, and as there were plenty of animals for the men to hunt, there was no fear of starving.

This strange kraal was built in a tree very near to the kingdom of Moselekatse, and as Mr. Moffat had brought the ambassadors quite as far as was necessary, he once more prepared to return home. The missionary went up to the two men, to wish them good-bye. They were sitting on the ground, but arose as their friend came near, and stood for a while silent and sad. Then one of them placed his right hand on Mr. Moffat's shoulder, and said,—

‘Mosheté, you have been like a father to us, you love us, and will you leave us?’ Then, pointing to the mountains far off on the horizon, he continued, ‘Yonder dwells the great Moselekatse. How shall we dare go to him if you are not with us? If you love us, save us. When we tell him you are not with us, he will ask why our conduct caused you to return. And before the sun goes down on the day we see his face, we shall be killed, because you are not with us.’

Mr. Moffat tried to persuade them to go on without him.

‘Are you afraid to come?’ they asked.

‘No,’ he answered.

‘Then come with us. It will save our lives, and our wives and children from sorrow.’

Mr. Moffat felt they very likely would be killed if he did not go with them; he therefore went on with them

through the beautiful land governed by that cruel, despotic king. For several days the waggon was detained by thunderstorms and very heavy rain; but, though the travellers were stopped by the weather, many visitors came to them from the villages around, bringing presents of milk and grain to supply them with food during the delay.

Moselekatse had been told that Mr. Moffat was coming, and he now sent a special messenger to bring him to the end of his journey. Mr. Moffat and another missionary, who had been also waiting to visit the king, went on with this messenger to the royal kraal. They left the waggons and their men to follow, and went on unarmed and almost alone.

The *khotla*, or fold, belonging to the king's kraal, was so large that it held as many as ten thousand oxen; and here Moselekatse arranged to receive his visitors.

Mr. Moffat was surprised, as he entered the fold, to see a company of warriors partly concealed on each side of the entrance, and a much larger company already in it.

Should not you have felt afraid? It was too late to turn back, whatever these savage, naked warriors intended doing. The missionaries and their attendants rode in and dismounted, as though they had seen nothing to alarm them. The soldiers at the entrance raised a hideous yell, and rushed in after them, then quietly joined the lines of warriors already standing in the *khotla*.

All remained perfectly still and motionless for a few moments. The stillness was succeeded by a loud, wild war-song. Another silence followed, and from behind his warriors marched forth Moselekatse, as naked as they, followed by a train of men bearing baskets and bowls of food.

He walked up to the missionaries, and saluted them with a clumsy shake of the hands. Then, politely pointing to the food, he asked them to eat; which they did.

As the waggons were approaching, Mr. Moffat asked the king where they might encamp. Moselekatse graciously answered, 'Mosheté, the land is before you; you are come to your son.'

When the 'moving houses' came nearer, the king grasped Mr. Moffat's arm tightly and drew back afraid. He had never seen waggons, and thought perhaps they might be alive. The oxen were unyoked, and, now that the waggons no longer moved, the king ventured to go to them, and at last even to examine them. Their wheels astonished him, and he could not understand how the bands around them did not show any join. One of the ambassadors, whose visit to Kuruman had made him wiser than his master, took Mr. Moffat's hand in his, and said,—

'My eyes saw this hand cut these bars of iron, take a piece off one end, and join them as you see.'

By looking more carefully, the king discovered the join.

'Does he give medicine to the iron, to make the ends hold together so?' asked the king.

'No,' answered the ambassador; 'nothing is used but a hammer, a chisel, and fire.'

Moselekatse was very kind to Mr. Moffat, and thanked him much for his attention to his messengers. He gave a great dance to show honour to his visitor, but this Mr. Moffat did not at all enjoy; for heathen dances are not decent, nor in any way pleasant to Christian people.

There was one thing which Mr. Moffat noticed very much as he watched Moselekatse and his subjects. His

people treated him as though he were a god. Whenever he rose up or sat down, he was hailed with a shout, and the common names by which he was called mean Great King, King of Heaven, Elephant.

On the Sunday after the visitors' arrival, a grand feast took place. Oxen were slaughtered, and all the people were delighted with the thought of a day of eating, drinking, singing, and dancing. Mr. Moffat, however, noticed one man gloomy and sad. Ah! there was to be no feast for him. He was a headman, and had committed some offence, for which he was this day to be tried. He was taken before the king, without his shield or spear, and the king heard the charge laid against him.

'You are a dead man,' said Moselekatse, when he had heard the charge; 'but I shall do to-day what I never did before. I spare your life for the sake of my friend, Mosheté. He has travelled from a far country to see me; and he has asked me not to go to war, or to kill men. When he returns to his own people, I wish him to return with a heart as white as he has made mine. I spare you, for I love him. He has saved the lives of my ambassadors. But,' continued the king, 'you must no more be a headman, nor enter the towns of the chiefs, nor join in the dance of the warriors. Go to the poor of the fields, and let your companions be the inhabitants of the deserts.'

The proud, savage man answered the king that he would rather die than live such a life, and begged as a mercy that he might be killed. His request was granted. His hands were tied over his head, and he was led away between two men. They took him up a hill to the edge of a precipice overhanging a river; there they threw him over, and he was devoured by the crocodiles, who were opening their great jaws below ready to receive him.

Mr. Moffat must have found it very difficult to worship God during a Sunday filled with wicked and savage deeds, as this one was; and yet no doubt his heart was full of prayer for these poor heathen, who knew not what they did.

Moselekatse often talked with Mr. Moffat, and asked a great many questions about the white men and their ways. He could not understand how it was that Mr. Moffat could have left his own country without his king's permission, and was very much surprised to hear that he had never seen his king, and did not know how many cattle he possessed.

Mr. Moffat tried to explain that he had come to Africa as the messenger of the King of kings, and that the King of England even had persons to teach him how to serve the great King of heaven.

'Is your king like me?' asked Moselekatse.

Of course Mr. Moffat could not say yes; for no two kings could be more unlike each other than Moselekatse and William IV., who was then reigning in England.

When Mr. Moffat told him of the industry of the English people, of the wonderful things they made, and of the vast numbers of sheep and oxen killed every day in England for food, Moselekatse exclaimed,—

'Your nation must be terrible in battle. You must tell your king that I wish to be at peace with him.'

One day Mr. Moffat was talking to the king about the sin of killing his fellow-men. The king agreed with all that was said, and assured the missionary that he would never go to war any more. But even while they were talking together a number of naked Matabele warriors came near, and bowed themselves at a distance from their chief to wait his orders. Their leader came near the king and very humbly saluted him.

‘O great King, O great Elephant,’ he cried, ‘tell us what town we may attack, for we need more spoils.’

In spite of what he had just said to his friend Mosheté, Moselekatse bade them go and attack some more defenceless people.

This was his way of keeping his warriors employed. They were sent to attack some town belonging to another tribe; the cattle they seized, and the inhabitants were driven out. The old men and women were killed at once. The men who had tried to defend themselves and their families, when they were caught, were bound round with a quantity of dried grass, and then set on fire. The young men and girls were loaded with the spoils taken from their own homes; they had become the slaves of their conquerors. The babies and little children were left, and died of hunger, or were eaten by the hyænas and lions. Sometimes these helpless little ones were put together in the *khotla*, wood was heaped upon them, and this heap was set on fire.





CHAPTER XVIII.

SINGING A B C.



WHEN Mr. Moffat reached home after his visit to King Moselekatse, he found the Bechuanas were still improving.

God had blessed the land with rain, and the people began to cultivate many new kinds of vegetables. Until this time, the only things they had planted were the native corn, pumpkins, beans, and water-melons. Now they watered their gardens, and raised maize, barley, peas, potatoes, carrots, onions, and even fruit trees; so that they had many more things to eat.

So much new work required new tools. The men, who used to be so idle, were trying to buy spades and ploughs. They were learning to read also, and wanted books.

Mr. Moffat had worked hard to translate the Gospel of Luke into the Sechuana language for them; and as soon as it was done he made a journey to the Cape to get it printed. He took his wife and children to the Cape with him, and as some of his children were growing up, he sent them to school. It was important for them to learn many things they could not know if they remained at Kuruman, and it was necessary, too, to remove them away from the bad example of the heathen people.

On their return to Kuruman, Mr. and Mrs. Moffat took with them a great many useful things. There was with them another missionary and his wife; all the copies of Luke's Gospel; all the copies of the hymns which Mr. Moffat had translated or composed; money to pay for building a new chapel; a large box filled with stuffs for clothing; and, to crown all, a printing-press, with type, paper, and ink in plenty.

Mr. and Mrs. Moffat's own treasures, their children, were left behind, and the house at Kuruman must have been quiet and lonely to their father and mother, without the patter of their footsteps and their cheerful prattle. There was, however, not very much time for sad thoughts. Mrs. Moffat was soon very busy with her sewing class again; and the printing-press was set to work by Mr. Moffat to print catechisms, spelling-books, and Scripture lessons.

How astonished the people were when they saw a sheet of paper disappear for a few minutes, and come out of the press again covered with black letters! When the first sheets were printed, a man, standing by, begged to have one. It was given to him, and away he bounded into the town, showing it to every one he met, and telling how Mosheté had made it in one minute, with a round black hammer and a shake of his arm. Of course every one wanted to see such conjuring as that; and crowds came to look at the printing-press.

As soon as he could, Mr. Moffat persuaded a trader to live at Kuruman station, and get what the people wished to buy. So many now wanted European things, and were willing to pay for them, that it was worth while for some one to come and open a store.

One day a stranger, riding on ox-back, stopped at the door of Mr. Moffat's house. There were with him two

or three attendants, also on oxen. The stranger was clean, and not so savage and naked as some of the Bechuanas, and he asked where he might lodge and pasture his oxen. Mr. Moffat pointed to an out-house, told him he might use it, and asked him why he had come to Kuruman.

The stranger said his name was Mosheu, and he was chief of some people living at a place called Mosheu's village. He had come because he had heard of the white teachers, and wished to see Mosheté with his own eyes. Certainly Mr. Moffat had not often been stared at more than Mosheu stared at him.

In the evening, some one was sent from Mr. Moffat's house to the shed, with some supper for Mosheu and his men. To every one's surprise, it was found that the stranger had brought food with him, and wanted none. This was the first person who had visited the Kuruman station without expecting the missionaries to supply them with food.

Mosheu used his eyes well, and was delighted with everything he saw at the station. Mr. Moffat spoke to him and his men of God who had made them, and of Jesus Christ who had come to save them, but they appeared to have no thoughts for these things; they had too much to look at, and wonder at, around them.

Time passed on, and again Mosheu appeared at Kuruman, and this time he was followed by a long train of oxen and people. He had brought his wives and relatives to see the wonders of Kuruman. But they had come for more than this. Although he had not seemed to attend, Mr. Moffat's words about a holy God who hated wickedness had sunk down into Mosheu's heart, and in his own kraal he had talked of what the white teacher had said. He had come back to ask,

‘What must I do to be saved?’ They had all come to ask, ‘What must we do to be saved?’

‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,’ was the missionary’s glad reply to their question.

Mosheu and his people remained for some time at the missionary station, in order to learn more about Jesus and how He saves us. When at last they all left, Mosheu begged Mr. Moffat to visit his village; which the good missionary promised to do as soon as he could, though he was too busy to go directly.

At last Mr. Moffat was able to keep his promise to Mosheu. He reached the village one day, very weary indeed, and hoped to lie down in his waggon and have a rest at once.

But rest was out of the question. No sooner did the waggon come near the village, than old and young, men, women, and children, came running together to see and welcome the white teacher. In a few minutes five hundred people were round the waggon, holding out their hands to take Mr. Moffat’s, crowding forward, and pressing upon one another in their eagerness. It was twelve o’clock at night before they were satisfied; and then, at last, Mr. Moffat lay down in his waggon to sleep.

By early dawn the people were round the waggon again, all waiting for him to come and speak to them. Mr. Moffat heard their eager, clamorous voices while he was dressing himself; and as soon as he appeared, messengers ran to tell those who had not come to the waggon that Mosheté was up. He did not wait to have any breakfast, but at once began to talk to the crowd, and spoke to them for an hour, while all remained silent and attentive. He told them of Jesus: how He had come to the earth, and had lived here; how He had been put to death, but had risen from His grave, and had

gone back to heaven, leaving pardon, and peace, and blessing behind. A story all so new and strange to them !

There, in the open air, in their *khotla*, they stood about and listened. The cattle wandered unheeded ; the dogs barked, and had sticks and stones flung at their heads to quiet them. Women who had been milking stood with their vessels of milk in their hands all the time ; and some strangers, who came up with bows and spears, laid their weapons down, and stood to listen too.

When Mr. Moffat had finished, he told the people to go home, and he went to a pool to wash himself, intending afterwards to rest a little in his waggon, and have some breakfast.

But when he returned from the pool, what was his surprise to see the people still waiting, and to hear that they wanted to be taught more directly.

‘I am hungry,’ said Mr. Moffat ; ‘wait while I eat, that I may be strong to talk.’

Hearing this, one of the chief women hobbled away to her hut, and soon returned with a wooden bowl filled with sour milk, which she gave to Mr. Moffat with a smile, saying,—

‘Drink away, drink much, and you will be able to speak long.’

So Mr. Moffat drank the milk, and began to speak again. But even these two addresses did not satisfy the eager people. After the cows had been milked in the evening, when the sun went down, and the day’s work was ended, once more they crowded about the waggon. There, while the clear, silvery moon shone on their dark upturned faces, they listened again to God’s message of love. And long after Mr. Moffat thought they ought all to have been asleep, they were lingering about, asking questions, or talking over what they had heard.

The next day Mr. Moffat began to teach the people to read. They fancied this learning to read would be very easy work, and understood nothing of the time it would take.

Two or three young men, who had already learned to read, had come with Mr. Moffat from Kuruman. A few spelling-books and sheets of letters were in the waggon, and soon the Kuruman readers were each surrounded by a circle of scholars, calling out A B C. Evening came, but the lessons did not stop. It was moonlight, and the letters were small, so that all could not see them, to know what they were like. But all could shout, and did shout, 'A B C.'

Mr. Moffat, too, had a class. In the waggon he had one sheet on which the alphabet was printed in large type. This sheet he spread on the ground, and a number of men knelt down around it.

Mr. Moffat pointed with a stick to A.

'A,' shouted the men after him, at the top of their voices.

They made a great deal of noise, because they said it would help their tongues to get used to the strange 'seeds,' as they called the letters.

The lesson went on for some time, and it was growing late. Mr. Moffat was very tired; he rose to rest his back, when he saw, coming towards him and his class, a number of the young people. They were dancing and skipping along in high glee, and caught hold of him rather roughly, crying, 'Oh, teach us the A B C with music!' One of the young men from Kuruman had told them that in the schools there the children sang their alphabet.

A B C with a tune was much more interesting and amusing than without it, and now the lesson was sung to

'Auld Lang Syne.' The people learned the tune very quickly, and were so pleased, that it was between two and three o'clock in the morning before they allowed their teacher to leave them.

Then Mr. Moffat went into his waggon, and, without undressing, laid himself down to sleep, while 'A B C' to 'Auld Lang Syne' was still being shouted by the excited people. The sound hardly died away during the remainder of the night, and when morning dawned, the women went to milk the cows, and the boys went to tend the calves, still humming 'A B C' to 'Auld Lang Syne.'

These poor people must have been sorry to see the oxen yoked into the kind missionary's waggon, and to find that he was going to leave them. Their teacher stayed with them only a very few days, but they did not forget what he had taught them, nor did they think any trouble too much for the sake of learning more. Often, after this, a party of men, women, and children from Mosheu's village might be seen wending their way over the weary plains that lay between their home and the Kuruman station, driving their milch cows before them.

They were going to Kuruman to learn more, and their cows were to supply them with milk during their stay, so that they might be no burden to the friends there.





CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHIEF MOTHIBI—MR. MOFFAT VISITS ENGLAND.



R. MOFFAT had brought from the Cape money to pay for the building of a new chapel at Kuruman. On the day that this new chapel was finished and opened, between eight and nine hundred people came to worship God in it; and on the Sunday after one hundred and fifty took the Lord's Supper there. One hundred and fifty obeying Jesus Christ's command, 'Do this in remembrance of Me.' What joy for the missionaries!

Many of the people wept for joy, as they remembered the past times of ignorance and sin, and thought of their great happiness now in knowing and loving Jesus. Surely the angels in heaven, who rejoice over one repenting sinner, were glad at the sight.

The chief Mothibi was, at this time, not living at Kuruman. He was old, and blind, and infirm. For many years he had heard the gospel, but he had not given his heart to Jesus. One day he asked his sons to lead him to the missionaries, and they took him to Kuruman.

'I am an old man,' he said to Mr. Hamilton,—'an old man, but without understanding. There is nothing left of me but my dry bones and withered skin. My heart

is sick, my mind is dark, my soul is sorrowful, and my memory is gone. Will Jesus let me come to Him now ?’

‘ Oh yes,’ Mrs. Hamilton replied ; ‘ Jesus says “ come ” even now.’

And Mothibi gave himself to Jesus, old and worn out as he was. And the merciful Saviour, who had waited for him so long, accepted the offering of his contrite heart. Humbly the old chief stood to be baptized among those whom he used to think no better than dogs. They were his fellow-Christians now. For the short remainder of his life, his grief was that he had treated his people so badly, and that he had not loved his Saviour sooner.

It was now more than twenty years since Mr. Moffat had left England. He had many reasons for wishing to pay a visit to his native land again. He wished to bring some of his children over, that they might have the advantage of an English education. There were many dear friends whom he and his wife desired to see again. And there were many things to tell the English people, which those who loved the Saviour would be glad to hear. They would be told that, after many years of toil and strife and suffering, the good seed was at last springing up and bearing fruit.

So arrangements were made at Kuruman. The other missionaries who had come there were left to do all the work, and Mr. and Mrs. Moffat and their children started for the Cape, and at last reached England.

Their friends were very pleased to see them again, and many people rejoiced to meet this devoted missionary, and hear him speak of what he had seen and suffered in Bechuanaland, and what the good God had done for the people there through the missionaries.



CHAPTER XX.

DR. LIVINGSTONE AND SECHELE.

WHILE Mr. Moffat was visiting England, another young Scotchman was sent out by the London Missionary Society to Africa. He went first to Kuruman, and afterwards to a chief named Sechele. Of this missionary you have often heard—David Livingstone. His name is better known among young people than even the name of Robert Moffat.

David Livingstone, however, is not spoken of as a missionary so much as a great traveller. He visited lands and people quite unknown before to Europeans. Indeed, since he went to Africa, it has become necessary to draw new maps of the country, and put in a great many new names of rivers, lakes, mountains, nations, and towns which Dr. Livingstone, and other explorers who followed him, have discovered.

Dr. Livingstone stayed with Sechele for some time. This chief became a Christian. He was earnest in all that he did. When he saw from God's Word that it was not right to have more than one wife, he made presents to all of his, except his principal wife, and sent them home to their relatives. He wanted all his people to become Christians, and at first thought he could make them believe in Christ by whipping them with whips

made out of rhinoceros hide. He soon learned better than that, and found he had to use other means of getting his people to hear about God.

When the time came for service, he sent a man among the huts with a bell, and this man succeeded very well in getting a number of women together. This is how he used to manage. He would stand on a raised place among the huts, and shout out as loud as possible,—

‘See that woman over there? Knock her down, knock her down! she is putting her pot on the fire! Look, there is a woman hiding! strike her! There, see, see! give it her well!’

This would set the women running as fast as possible to the place of meeting, for each one was afraid she was the one to be beaten. The missionary did not approve of this method either, and put a stop to it.

Dr. Livingstone married the eldest daughter of Mr. Moffat, of whom you have heard when she was a baby. He had been in Africa for twelve years before he began his great journeys of discovery. He had in these years taken several shorter journeys, but had returned from them to his wife and children in Sechele’s town. When Sechele found that his kind teacher had made up his mind to leave him, he determined to send his five eldest children to the Kuruman station to be taught.

The mothers and relatives of the children did not at all like them to be sent so far away from home. In order to show their grief, they came to the chief’s huts, and there, sitting down upon the ground, made a great noise, weeping and wailing.

Sechele was very angry. He was grieved himself to part with his children, but he was resolved they should go. So he told the women that, if they were not quiet soon, he would himself go away with the children to

Kuruman, and leave his people to get on as they could. On hearing this, the women wept and wailed more loudly than ever; but perhaps they soon left off, for Sechele did not leave them.

It was very wise of Sechele to send his children to Mr. Moffat, as, when Dr. Livingstone left, there was no missionary living at his town to teach them. The children were sent in waggons, with twelve attendants. It was a long journey to school—two hundred and fifty miles in slow-moving waggons. It does not seem that Sechele had even asked Mr. Moffat to take care of his children. He must have had great faith in the missionaries' kindness when he sent his boys and girls so far away, to strangers who did not expect them. He sent a letter to Mr. Moffat, asking him to teach the children; and Mr. and Mrs. Moffat were so good as to take all the five, and provide for them.

The children all seemed very happy. But their attendants prepared to return home with the waggons and leave them, and one little boy cried when he had to say 'good-bye' to his old nurse. This little boy, who loved his nurse, was called Bantsang.

Sechele's children had already been taught in Dr. Livingstone's school, and so were not as ignorant as savages. Mrs. Moffat found that they had learned to obey. Every morning she sent them to the day school. When the girls returned, they did needlework with Mrs. Moffat; in the afternoon a native Christian girl gave them all a reading lesson; and in the evening they had some writing to do.

While Sechele's children were thus safe among Christian friends, he was himself in great danger and trouble. The Boers—the old enemies of the native Africans—attacked his town, and destroyed it. They

plundered the mission station, broke Dr. Livingstone's medicine bottles, destroyed his books, scattered the people, and carried away many prisoners.

Sechele did his best in fighting against his enemies, and in the fight some of the Boers were killed. The Boers were so used to kill their enemies and to escape themselves, that they were quite surprised that Sechele's warriors had learned to fight and kill too. They believed that Dr. Livingstone had been teaching the people to fight, and this made them very angry with the missionary.

Poor Sechele now had no home. He sent his wife with her baby to Mr. Moffat, and also a letter telling him what had happened. Then Sechele himself set off on a very long journey—a journey to London, to see the Queen of England. He wished to tell her how ill her subjects, the Boers, had behaved to him, and to ask her to make them give up the prisoners whom they had carried away.

Sechele knew it was very far to England, but he had no idea how far. He reached the Cape; but when he saw the sea, and heard of the immense quantity of water between the shores of Africa and the shores of England, and of the money he would need to pay for going to England and coming back, he saw he must give up his intention.

Very likely our good Queen never heard how this African chief started on his long journey, for the sake of asking her help.

Sechele returned to his own country; his people came together again; they rebuilt their ruined town, and Sechele was soon a more powerful chief than before. He went to the Kuruman station for his wife and children, and was very much surprised and delighted when he found how much they had learned.

Mrs. Moffat felt sorry that the children should go away among their heathen relatives again, and asked Sechele to allow the younger ones at least to remain with her a little longer. But, though little Bantsang was not more than ten years old, his father thought even he could read and write nicely, that he was quite as clever as he need be, and it was time that they all set to work to teach others now.

So the children were supplied with clothes, spelling-books, writing-paper, and pencils, and they returned home with their father and his wife. A native teacher from Kuruman also went with them.

It was a great pity that these children were taken away from their Christian home. In some things, indeed, they knew more than their father, but this was likely to make them conceited, and young people are very seldom wise enough not to be led astray by bad examples. Indeed, very often even grown-up people are led to do wrong by seeing others do wrong things. Only those, who, by the help of God's Holy Spirit, have set the pure example of the Lord Jesus before them, can hope to live without being like the bad people who are in the world.

Sechele had not done a wise thing; he was leading his children into temptation. They were not fit to guide themselves, and still less fit to teach heathen men and women.





CHAPTER XXI.

MR. MOFFAT TAKES SUPPLIES TO DR. LIVINGSTONE.



R. LIVINGSTONE had sent his wife and children to England, and was himself far away from civilised men, travelling in unknown countries and among unknown nations. His wife must have often felt very anxious about her dear husband, for she could hear nothing about him. She wrote letters to him, and sent them to her father, Mr. Moffat, hoping that at Kuruman they might know something about him.

But Mr. Moffat did not know much more than his daughter. He wrote more letters, and sent them altogether to a chief called Sekhome. Sekhome had promised to send on letters to a place near the Zambesi river called Linyanti, and to Linyanti Dr. Livingstone had said he would send a man to wait for them and bring them to him.

By and by, people travelling from Sekhome's country told Mr. Moffat that their chief had not kept his promise. Instead of sending a man to Linyanti with the letters, he had kept them, and said he meant to keep them till Naké—that was their name for Dr. Livingstone—came himself and paid for them.

It was very wrong of Sekhome to break his word, and



DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

he caused a great deal of trouble by doing so. But that is no wonder; people who cannot be trusted always do give trouble to others.

Mr. Moffat was very vexed, for he not only had no news of Dr. Livingstone for himself, but could send none to his daughter in England. Then, too, Dr. Livingstone had heard nothing of his friends; and, after his long absence, he must be in need of a great many things which he could not obtain where he was,—new boots, and coats, and hats, new tents, and rifles, and such things.

Mr. and Mrs. Moffat thought over all this. They decided that Mr. Moffat had better go himself to Linyanti, and take the letters and things which Dr. Livingstone might need. When all things were ready, the oxen were yoked in, and once more the good missionary journeyed away from Kuruman. There were two traders going the same way, so that Mr. Moffat did not go alone. They were going to the Matabele, the people of Moselekatse, and their waggons, with Mr. Moffat's, and all the oxen and drivers, made a large caravan.

This was not going to be quite a straight journey to Linyanti and back, for Mr. Moffat wished to pay a few visits on the way.

First a visit to Sechele, to see how he and the children were getting on.

Second, a visit to Sekhome, to ask for the letters.

Third, a visit to Moselekatse, through whose country the supplies must be sent, as it was not possible to trust any more to Sekhome.

Sechele was very pleased to see his kind friend. When he heard that the waggons were near his town, he went out with his wife and children to receive his visitors

Sechele's wife and children looked neat. They wore well-made panther-skin karosses over their other clothes.

Mr. Moffat and his companions went to Sechele's home with him. There was a kind of verandah in front of the house, and behind were courts and sheds, in which corn, pumpkins, dried water-melons, and many other things were stored. The house was large and comfortable, and was divided, so as to make a sitting-room on one side, and a bedroom on the other. The floor was hard and clean, and on the walls were hanging rifles, bullet-pouches, and powder-horns.

In the sitting-room were some chairs and a table; and at a fire which was burning there the servants were attending to their cooking. Clean, well-washed bowls were placed upon the table, and presently the contents of the pot which had been on the fire were emptied into the bowls. Clean spoons were handed to Mr. Moffat and the traders, with the help of which they quickly disposed of their meal of porridge.

You are told these things about Sechele's house that you may compare it in your own mind with what you have heard of the old heathen habits of the people.

As the sun sank in the west, a bell was rung. This was a call to school. Mr. Moffat went with Sechele to the schoolhouse; for he wanted to see how many scholars there were, and what they were learning. Not many people came to school. The native teacher from Kuruman was there, and Sechele's children, but only one or two others.

Mr. Moffat asked his old pupils how many people they had taught to read. The poor children had to confess they had taught no one; for no one would come to them to learn. Sechele had obliged many of his people to learn to make waggons and use tools, so Mr. Moffat told

him he had better make them learn to read also, as they were so foolish as not to do it willingly.

The next day Mr. Moffat sat and talked with Sechele for five hours. They talked of a good many things, and a great deal was said about the children. They were not behaving as well as Sechele hoped they would do. The elder ones even wished to become heathens again. This was a great trouble to their father, and he begged Mr. Moffat to speak to the children, and tell them how wrong they were.

The next day the children were called to speak with Mr. Moffat. They came into the room where he and their father were sitting. There were all his old pupils, whom he had taught so carefully, and prayed for so much,—Sebele, Ope, Kirebolecoe, Kuanting, and Bantsang. All of them looked grave except Kirebolecoe, and she was grinning, and behaving as though she did not care at all for being reproved.

Mr. Moffat had his Bible in his hand, and he read from it, 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.' The children knew what their kind teacher meant—they had not been obeying their father.

Then he spoke solemn words to them about sin and disobedience; how God noticed it, and punished it. He begged them all to think of these things, and to ask God to help them to do what they knew was right.

Ope answered, 'Father won't let me do as I like; I will go and do as the heathen do.'

Kirebolecoe said, 'If Ope goes I shall go also;' and Kuanting said the same.

Here were two naughty children following the bad example of an elder sister.

Sebele said, 'I do not wish to do wrong; I will not go;' and Bantsang made the same answer.

Sebele was the eldest son, and Bantsang the youngest. Doubtless little Bantsang would have answered as the others did, had not Sebele led him right.

Then Sechele spoke to his rebellious children. 'You eat my food,' he said, 'you wear my clothes, you live in my houses. You are mine, and I am your father. Will you run away, and put me to shame and grief?'

Sechele must have sorely repented his mistake in bringing his children away from Kuruman.

Two days after this talk with the children, Mr. Moffat said 'good-bye' to Sechele, and with his whole party left the town. They were going to the Bamangwato country, to see its clever, cunning chief, Sekhome.

The Bamangwato people knew that Mr. Moffat was coming, and many ran out to see this far-famed teacher when they heard of his approach. The traders had travelled through the country before, so the natives had seen them, but of Mr. Moffat they had only heard. Now they came to look at him, and they amused him very much by the way in which they talked of him.

They would give him a good stare, and say to each other, 'Is it he?'

'Yes, it is he. Salute him.'

And then came the salutation,—

'Good evening morning.'

They had heard English people say, 'Good evening' and 'Good morning;' so they, knowing no better, put the words together and said, 'Good evening morning.'

Mr. Moffat smiled, for he knew the meaning of it all was, 'We have heard of you; we are very pleased to see you, and wish to be very polite.'

Mr. Moffat sent a messenger to Sekhome to ask for the parcel of letters he had kept. Sekhome did not know what might happen to him if he kept them, now that

Mr. Moffat himself had come. He very quickly gave up the letters, and the messenger brought them to Mr. Moffat.

When Mr. Moffat made up that parcel, he did not expect to open it again; but now he sat down in his waggon and began to look over the old letters.

While he was employed in this way, a queer, dark, short little man peeped in at him. It was Sekhome. He supposed that Mr. Moffat would not be displeased now, and so had come to see the missionary. But he was not at all sorry for what he had done, and only laughed at everything Mr. Moffat said.

From Sekhome's land to that of Moselekatse there was no road, and the travellers knew nothing about the way; so that they had a very difficult and troublesome journey. They had hoped that some of the Bamangwato people would have gone with them as guides, but Sekhome forbade any one to tell the way, and was pleased to think of the dangers that would have to be overcome.

Perhaps this was not so unkind as it looked. Sekhome was afraid of the Matabele attacking his people, and was sure that if the way was made at all plain, the Matabele warriors would soon come and try to destroy his town, which was called Shoshong.

You have heard a good deal about the troubles of travelling in Africa, where no roads have been made, so that you can imagine this journey. At last Matabeleland was safely reached; and from the joy shown by the people when they saw him again, Mr. Moffat felt sure that their king, Moselekatse, was still his friend.

Do you remember the grand and rather alarming reception which King Moselekatse gave to Mr. Moffat on his first visit? There was no show of warriors, or dance in the *khotla* now. Poor Moselekatse was ill, too ill to enjoy any splendour; too ill even to admire very much

the beautiful new waggon which Mr. Moffat had brought all this way as a present for him.

There he sat on a kaross, quite helpless. He held out his hand to Mr. Moffat, but he did not speak. He only hid his face and wept. For some time he could not even look at his old friend.

At last he began repeating Mr. Moffat's name. 'Mosheté, Mosheté,' he said; 'surely you are Mosheté. I am not dreaming.'

'Yes,' Mr. Moffat answered, 'I am Mosheté. God has spared us both, and brought me to see you again.'

'Your God has sent you to help me, and heal me,' said the poor king.

This was true. Mr. Moffat gave Moselekatse some medicine which made him better. He also persuaded him not to drink so much beer; for it was the quantity of native beer he had drunk which had made him ill. So, by means of medicine and less beer, he recovered enough to be able to walk about a little.

Moselekatse wished very much that Mr. Moffat would stop with him always; and yet he would not allow the missionary to speak to the people about God. Mr. Moffat did remain a month, but, as his object was to forward supplies and letters to Dr. Livingstone, he was all the while wishing to get on.

The king did all he could to prevent his dear Mosheté going; but at last, finding Mr. Moffat would not stay with him, he resolved to stay with Mr. Moffat.

So, on the day that Mr. Moffat started, Moselekatse appeared, and, without asking permission, told his men to help him into Moshete's waggon. A number of parcels were put in after the king, but Mr. Moffat did not take much notice of this. He thought, perhaps, the king wished to go and see some of his wives at the next

village; he never imagined that Moselekatse intended to go all the way to Linyanti.

The king's new waggon followed, but he did not use it. He preferred being with Mosheté, and made himself quite at home, even using Mr. Moffat's bed.

As the waggons did not move very fast, it was easy for those on foot to keep up with them. Moselekatse, being king, had a large number of walking attendants. There were in the crowd many of his headmen, twenty women carrying large calabashes of beer on their heads; and many other people bearing karosses and food.

As soon as the waggons halted for the night, these people set to work and made green booths with boughs of trees. When the booths were made,—and they did not take long,—fires were lighted; oxen were killed, cut up, cooked, and eaten; while all the people were chattering, laughing, and merrymaking. Quite a pleasant picnic, was it not?

The want of roads made the travelling very unpleasant to the poor king. He could walk very little, and as the waggon jolted over the large stones, or tilted backwards, forwards, and sideways over the uneven ground, he was tumbled about and badly bruised. Mr. Moffat assured him it was all good for his health; and very likely it was. It seems a wonder he did not go back, and stay quietly in his royal hut; but he preferred remaining with the missionary.

Moselekatse could not read, he did not know even his letters, yet he liked looking into books. He knew that white men obtained their knowledge from books, and he tried hard to find some knowledge for himself in them. He thought all books had been made by the white man's God, because he knew one book was called the book God had given to man.

While in Mr. Moffat's waggon, he spent many hours in looking at the books which the missionary had with him. He would turn over the leaves, and was quite delighted to find that he understood some of the pictures,—a picture of a parasol, for instance, which was on the cover of one of the magazines.

But at last the travelling was brought to a sudden stop. Some men had been sent forward to find water. They brought back word that it would take the oxen four days to reach the next supply of water, and that water was in a part of the country where there were *tsétse*, so that the oxen could not go.

'*Tsétse* !' you exclaim ; ' what are they ? Robbers ? '

No, they are not robbers.

The *tsétse* is only a fly, a little larger than the flies which dance so merrily up and down in our rooms all the summer long. Only a fly,—but then what mischief it does ! No horse, no dog, no ox is safe where this fly lives. It comes with a buzzing noise and settles upon the animal. The animal is not startled ; it does not seem hurt ; it takes no notice of the fly. The fly comes and pierces the skin with its three-pronged proboscis, and goes buzzing away again. But the animal will die. It eats still, it walks still. But it gets thinner and thinner ; it looks ill ; it grows weak. Day after day it gets worse and worse ; until at last it staggers and falls, and dies. It is very strange that if this fly bites a man, the man is only stung as he would be by a gnat ; he is not made ill, he does not die. And if the wild beasts are bitten, they do not suffer. The *tsétse* kills horses, oxen, and dogs.

Well, if there were *tsétse* flying about in front, it was no use to take on the waggons ; for all the oxen would be killed.

But Dr. Livingstone's things, how were they ever to reach him? Mr. Moffat went to Moselekatse and said, 'If you will allow me to take some of your men to help carry the things, I will walk to Linyanti with them.'

'If you go,' answered Moselekatse, 'I will go too. I cannot walk; more men must go, and they shall carry me, that I may still be with you.'

'Well,' said Mr. Moffat, 'if you will give me more men, enough to carry all Dr. Livingstone's things to Linyanti, I and my men will return with you instead of going on.'

To this the king willingly agreed. The goods were made up into seventeen parcels, and these packages were carried away by seventeen of Moselekatse's men; each one being laden besides with a shield, a spear, and some food.

Linyanti was in the country of the Makololo. You have heard of them before; it was the same tribe that used to be called Mantatees. They were enemies to the Matabele now, which made it a greater kindness for the men to venture to their country with these loads.

Mr. Moffat thanked the king much for sending the men, but said he wished him to be still more kind. He was sad, and he could not be happy, because he might not tell the people about Jesus Christ. Moselekatse made no answer then, but a few days after, as the waggons were returning to the royal town, a message was given to Mr. Moffat by one of the warriors. This was the message:

'The king is sure the word of God is good. You are his father, for you are full of kindness and wisdom. You must command, and he will tell his people to hear you. He is ashamed and afraid, because he has made you sad.'

What a pleasant message! As soon as they came to a village, the missionary sent word to the king that he wished the people called, in order that he might speak to them.

Moselekatse ordered every one to go and listen, and he himself went to hear what was said.

The king must have heard many things which were not pleasant to hear, for Mr. Moffat said what he knew was true, not what would please the king. He remembered the King of kings, and thought only of pleasing Him. Therefore he told Moselekatse and all the people that it was wrong to lie, or steal, or kill, wrong to keep slaves, or to ill-treat any one; and wrong to marry more than one wife.

Now some people, when they are told of things that are wrong, never say to themselves, 'Do I do that wrong thing?' They say instead, 'I hope my neighbour sees how wicked he is, and will be ashamed of himself.' This is something the way in which King Moselekatse listened.

He nodded his head, and looked as though he hoped every one would hear how wicked they were. But he never seemed to think about himself, nor his four hundred wives, nor his many slaves, nor of the things he had stolen, the men he had killed, and the lies he had told. Moselekatse did not become a Christian, as Africaner, and Mothibi, and Sechele did; he did not send away his hundreds of wives, nor set his slaves free.

At last the time arrived for Mr. Moffat once more to leave Moselekatse. The king wished to give his dear Mosheté a great quantity of ivory as a present, but Mr. Moffat refused to take it; he would only accept just enough to pay the expenses of his journey. If Mr. Moffat had wished to grow rich, he might easily have

done so, for the king would have given him as much ivory as he liked to take, which he might have sold to traders. But growing rich would not have helped on his missionary work, and Moselekatse would not have believed he was in earnest about what he said of God, if he had been willing to take the ivory. He would have said in his heart, 'We need not listen to this strange story about Jesus. What Mosheté really wants is to grow rich and be a great chief.'

When Jesus was on earth, He said, 'Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or child, or lands; for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.' You see from this that Jesus does give to those who serve Him faithfully much more—a hundred times more—than they give up for Him,—and everlasting life. If you are one of His faithful servants, this is what He will give to you.





CHAPTER XXII.

DR. LIVINGSTONE RETURNS TO ENGLAND, AND TELLS
ABOUT THE SLAVES.

BEFORE he arrived at Linyanti, Dr. Livingstone heard that a party of Moselekatse's men had brought some packages of goods for him. He heard, too, that the Makololo were very much puzzled about the things. They could not believe that Mosheté had sent them, and thought it was some trick of their enemies, and that there must be witchcraft in the parcels.

When the seventeen Matabele men, with the parcels, arrived at the river which divided them from the Makololo, they called to the people on the other side to bring canoes, and fetch the goods sent by Mosheté for Naké, as they called Dr. Livingstone. Instead of bringing the canoes, the Makololo shouted across the river,—

‘Go along with you; we know better than that. Naké has gone away to the north. How could he tell Mosheté to send the things here?’

The Matabele answered, ‘Here are the goods. We place them now before you. If they are spoiled, the guilt will be yours.’

Having said this, the men put down their packages, and turned away homewards.

When the men were gone, the people on the other side of the river felt themselves to be in a great difficulty. Suppose the packages did really contain things sent by Mosheté to Naké; how angry both Naké and Mosheté would be if they were spoiled! They were very much afraid of these powerful white men. But suppose the packages contained witchcraft medicine; what dreadful things might happen! What were they to do? They dared not leave the packages on the other side of the river; they dared not bring them to their town.

At last, with fear and trembling, they crossed the stream in their canoes. The parcels did not look very dreadful. They ventured to take them to a little island in the middle of the river. Here they placed them all together, and built a hut over them, to protect them from sun and rain. The Makololo having done this, returned safely to the shore, and nothing dreadful happened; none of them had been bewitched.

On that little island in the middle of the river the parcels remained untouched for a whole year; but at the end of that time Dr. Livingstone arrived, and opened them. The news contained in the letters was by this time very old, yet Dr Livingstone must have found great pleasure in them, and must have felt very grateful to Mr. Moffat for all the trouble he had taken.

The chief of the Makololo, whose name was Sekeletu, was as fond of Dr. Livingstone as Moselekatse was of Mr. Moffat. When one of the chief's brothers had tried to spear him, Dr. Livingstone had saved his life, and for this Sekeletu was very grateful, and showed his gratitude in many ways.

Once when Sekeletu and his friend Naké were travelling together, they lost their way in a forest. Evening

came on, it grew dark, and they were obliged to spend the night under a tree. It was raining heavily and thundering and lightning. The chief had a kaross with him, but Dr. Livingstone had none. The one blanket was not large enough to cover them both, so Sekeletu spread it over his friend, to keep him from being chilled by the rain, while he himself lay down uncovered on the wet ground.

There was one thing which Dr. Livingstone saw while he was with the Makololo which troubled him very much. They began to sell people for slaves. All these African tribes had slaves before this, captives whom they conquered, or took in war, but they did not buy and sell slaves. The Boers, too, still had slaves, and once, when they were fighting against the Bechuanas, and conquered them, they took away seventy children, and drove them into their own part of the country for slaves.

But now the Arab traders came up the Zambesi, and wanted to buy slaves.

The Makololo wanted guns, and they exchanged with these slave-dealers eight boys for eight old muskets. These boys were not their own children; they had been taken from their enemies in war.

Soon after this the Makololo were at war again, and as they were returning home with a number of captives some Arab slave-dealers met them, and bought thirty of their prisoners for three muskets.

These boys and men were no doubt treated as the Arabs generally do treat their slaves. Their heads were fastened into a long stick, forked at one end, which held them firm, and each stick was held behind by another slave.

How their necks and shoulders must have been hurt

by the hard, rough wood, as it was pushed up and down and any way by their careless drivers, their heads all the time being gripped fast in the fork, which was fastened across the front with another piece of wood.

Slave-traders in Africa take their slaves in sticks like this until they are 'tamed,' which means so worn out by suffering that they cannot cry, or resist, or run away. Then the sticks are taken off the sore and aching necks, and the slaves are fastened together with chains at the wrists,—heavy chains which hurt the wrists, and are difficult to carry.

The Makololo, once pointing to some heavy waggon chains some missionaries had, said, 'Those are like the chains with which the traders fasten our children.'

Many slaves taken in this way in Africa have dropped down and died on the dreary road to the coast.

But this is not the only way in which these traders get slaves. Sometimes, indeed very often, they have attacked a whole town, and burned it, killed hundreds and hundreds of people, and driven the rest away as slaves. No wonder a good man like Dr. Livingstone was sad. He did all he could to stop this wicked trade, and it was soon known that he belonged to a tribe that loved the black man, and did not make slaves.

The time came for Dr. Livingstone to leave Linyanti. He said farewell to his friend Sekeletu, and set off for Kuruman, and then he went to the Cape, and returned to England. How pleased his wife and children, and all his relatives and friends, must have been to see him again! Large meetings assembled to welcome him and hear him speak of his discoveries; he was invited to grand dinners, and had many polite speeches and kind presents made to him. He tried, above all things, to make the English people think about this dreadful slave-

trade and the misery it caused, and you will be glad to know that the English Government has for many years now been trying to stop it.

The Queen asked Dr. Livingstone to go and see her at her palace, and she talked to him about his travels. Dr. Livingstone said to the Queen that he was very glad he could go back and tell Sekeletu and other African chiefs that he had seen her, for the people often asked what his chief was like, and whether she was very rich. And when he said, 'Yes, she was very rich,' they asked next, 'How many cows has she?' This made the Queen laugh.


Before he went back to Africa, a letter was written in the Queen's name to Sekeletu, thanking him for the kindness and help which he had given to her servant, Dr. Livingstone. In this letter, too, Sekeletu was told what people in England thought about the slave-trade. He was asked to put a stop to it where he lived, and was reminded that if he wanted to be great and powerful, like the white men, he must listen to what they taught him about God.

While Dr. Livingstone was in England, it was arranged by the Missionary Society which had sent out Dr. Livingstone and Mr. Moffat, that they would send out more missionaries,—some to Matabeleland to King Moselekatse, and some to Sekeletu at Linyanti. These things made Dr. Livingstone return to Africa full of hope. He hoped that the slave-trade would be soon stopped, and that soon, too, a great many of the Makololo and Matabele would learn to know and love God.



CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MISSIONARIES WHO WENT TO THE MAKOLOLO.

HE missionaries who were to go to the Makololo and Matabele all met at Kuruman, before starting to the north. What a busy time there was of preparation at the mission station in getting things ready for the long journeys and the new homes! How many prayers were offered to God for blessing and guidance! how many counsels were given by the older missionaries to the younger ones!

There were Mr. and Mrs. Helmore and their four children, Mr. and Mrs. Price, and Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, who were all going to the Makololo at Linyanti. And there were Mr. and Mrs. John Moffat, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas, and Mr. Sykes, who were going to the Matabele.

And now, you see, our story is breaking up into several parts. There is the story still going on at Kuruman, and there are two branches from it; while Dr. Livingstone is away looking for new countries and new people, to whom he hopes new missionaries will go.

This is not generally the way in story-books. As you go on towards the end of a story-book, all the parts generally come together, as it were, to one centre, and finish up.

But this is a true story, and a story about the coming of Christ's kingdom.

Christ's kingdom is to be a very large kingdom indeed, taking in every man, and woman, and child on this earth; and wherever a beginning of it is brought, it spreads and spreads,—from one man or child to another, from one town or village to another, from one nation and country to another.

The story of Christ's kingdom is a story without an end; it is becoming bigger and bigger every year. You can always, if you will, hear more and more about it; and how beautiful it will be to you, if you are yourself in the story, making a part of it in your own life!

In the years which have passed away since those of which you have read, many missionaries have gone to Africa. North and south, east and west, they have gone. It would be quite impossible to tell you about them all; but you will like to know a little about the missionaries who were now going to the Makololo and the Matabele, and also to hear a little more about Mr. and Mrs. Moffat and Dr. Livingstone.

It was in July that Mr. and Mrs. Helmore, and Mr. and Mrs. Price, with the children, waggons, waggon-drivers, and oxen, set out from Kuruman for the country of the Makololo. Mrs. Mackenzie was ill, and could not go with them, so her husband stayed behind with her, intending to follow as soon as his wife was better. This large missionary party proceeded slowly on their way for many a long and weary mile. They thought that if they had a very good journey, and very few accidents, they might reach Linyanti in about seventy days, or ten weeks.

The river Zouga was safely crossed, and missionaries, men, waggons, and oxen arrived without accident at a place called Kama Kama. But here trouble began.

There were still three hundred miles lying between them and the Makololo; and in all that distance there was not a pool or spring of water to be depended upon. If it rained, water might be procured. If no showers fell, ponds and streams would be all dried up by the sun's heat.

With many prayers to God for His help and support, the travellers urged their oxen on into this desert.

For three days they travelled, and found nothing but the beds of pools, dry, quite dry. The little water which they were carrying in the waggons was not enough to supply both men and oxen. The oxen were tired and exhausted; they would not be able to go much farther without water. The children were feverish and fretful, for the heat was intense, and their mother could not give them as much water as they needed.

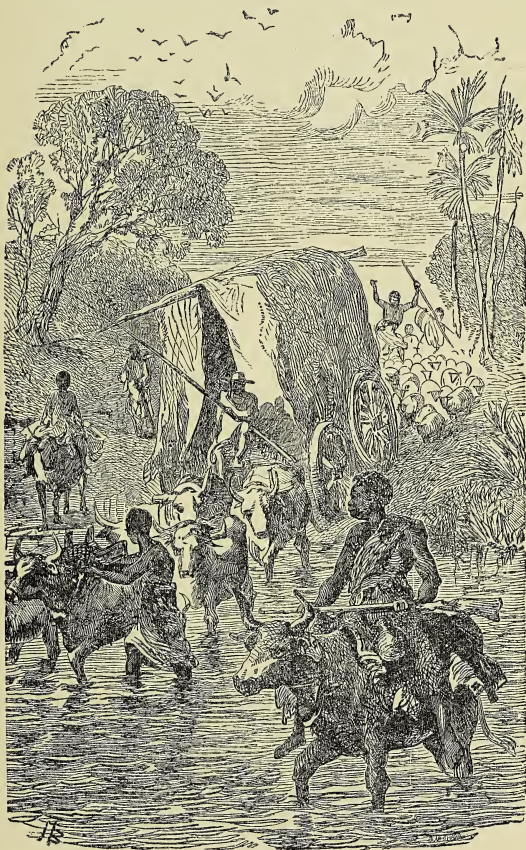
The only chance of saving their lives was to turn back, and seek again the pools of water they had passed and left behind. But as, with renewed hope, the missionaries came back to the places at which, two or three days before, they had left water, they found the shallow pools already dry.

As the object now was to reach water as quickly as possible, it was arranged that the waggons should not try to keep together, but should all be pressed on as fast as the oxen could go; and whoever reached water first should send some back to the others by the men.

Mrs. Helmore wrote a letter from this wilderness to her sister; and as that will tell you best what the missionaries suffered, a part of it is copied for you.

'We may expect rain this month, and are longing for it, as those only can long who have travelled through a dry and parched wilderness, where no water is. Our poor oxen were at one time four days, and at

another time five days, without drink. It was quite painful to see how tame they were made by thirst. They crowded round the waggon, licking the water-casks,



MISSIONARIES ON A JOURNEY.

and putting their noses down to the dishes and basins and then looking up to our faces, as if asking for water.

‘The poor children continually asked for water. I put them off as long as I could, and when they could be denied no longer, doled the precious fluid out a spoonful at a time to each of them.

‘Poor Selina and Henry cried bitterly. Willie bore up manfully, but his sunken eyes showed how much he suffered. As for dear Lizzie, she did not utter a word of complaint, nor even ask for water, but lay on the floor of the waggon all day, perfectly quiet, her lips quite parched and blackened.

‘Once, dear Willie, after a desperate effort not to cry, suddenly asked me if he might drain the bottles. Of course I consented, and presently he called out to me, with much eagerness, that he had found some. Poor little fellow! it must have been little indeed; for his sister Selina had drained them already.

‘Soon after, he called out that he had found another bottle of water. You can imagine his disappointment when I told him it was cocoanut oil melted by the heat.

‘All day the oxen had been too weak to move the waggon, but about sunset we made another attempt to drive them, and went about five miles. The people then proposed going on with the oxen in search of water, promising to return with a supply to the waggon.

‘I felt anxious at their leaving us; but they had not been gone more than half an hour, when I saw, in the bright moonlight, a figure coming along the road. At first I could not make it out—it looked so tall; but on coming nearer, who should it prove to be but my servant girl, Kionecoe, carrying on her head an immense calabash, holding about a pailful of water. She had walked four hours.

‘A young man had set out with her, but he became so exhausted that he lay down under a bush to rest; and

on she came alone, in the dead of night, in a strange country infested with lions, bearing her precious burden!

‘Oh, how grateful I felt to her! This kind act revealed her heart; it seemed to draw us more closely together, and her conduct ever since has been excellent.

‘I made a bed for the girl beside me in the forepart of the waggon; and the children having slaked their thirst with the deliciously cool water, we all slept till six o’clock.

‘Then I made coffee, and offered some to Kionecoe and the young man, who had come up. At first they declined it, saying the water was for me and the children. I had now the happiness of seeing the children enjoy a meal of tea and biscuits.

‘While we were preparing the coffee, up came a pack-ox, sent by Mr. Price, with two water-casks for me, and soon after some natives arrived with a calabash. We had now an abundant supply; and my heart overflowed with gratitude to our Father in heaven, who had watched over me and mine, as over Hagar of old, and sent us relief.

‘We could now wash our faces and hands,—a luxury we had not enjoyed since Sunday.’

Some months passed after this letter was written and received, and nothing more was heard of the missionaries. It was hoped that they were safe and well, and that no news had been received only on account of the great difficulty of sending letters one thousand miles, through a country in which there were no post-offices or postmen.

At last letters were brought to Kuruman. The travellers, after many, many difficulties and troubles, had reached Linyanti, but they had been no less than seven months on the weary way.

The day after the missionaries arrived, the chief, Sekeletu, sent them a fine fat ox as a present; and on the day following he went himself, with an immense number of his men, to see them. The chief received his visitors kindly, and told the missionaries he hoped they would remain at Linyanti.

Mr. Helmore and Mr. Price said in reply, that Naké had told them that Sekeletu would give them some land on the other side of the river, where there was a hill; that there they wished to go, and build houses, and hoped to live long with the Makololo, and teach them much about God.

When Sekeletu heard that the missionaries wished to cross the river and build houses on higher ground, he said, 'No,' the waggons should remain where they were, they should not be moved. Dr. Livingstone was not there to arrange matters. Mr. Helmore and Mr. Price knew he was travelling up the Zambesi, and hoped it would not be very long before he reached Linyanti. They longed to see him, because he was very clever in persuading the African chiefs to do what he wished done.

They knew that the ground upon which they were encamped was very unhealthy; but as they could not move, they very wisely did not do harm by quarrelling with the chief. They built huts and put up tents, and hoped that, directly Dr. Livingstone arrived, they would be allowed to go to the hills.

The missionaries began at once to teach the people; for Mr. Helmore had been a missionary in Africa for many years, and knew the Sechuana language well. They taught, and prayed, and waited. They waited for a more healthy home and for Dr. Livingstone.

Dr. Livingstone was travelling towards them as fast as he could; but a terrible enemy was coming faster.

There, in Linyanti, among the dank weeds on the oozy banks of the river, among the thick, overgrown swamps around, this enemy was already lurking.

It was 'the pestilence that walketh in darkness.' It was upon them before they knew of its approach. They were overcome by it without seeing it. Mr. and Mrs. Helmore, the four little children, and all the servants, were in a few days lying on their beds unable to rise, delirious and restless, or unconscious with fever.

Mr. and Mrs. Price were also very ill, but they could still move about, and wait upon their friends, and their own little sick baby, who had been born since they left Kuruman.

The first who died was little Henry. He had been lying on the same bed as his brother and sisters outside the tent door, and their mother was by their side, with her head resting on a cushion. So they had been lying all day, and when evening came, one by one they dropped asleep.

Mr. Price went to them before going to sleep himself, to see if he could do anything to make them more comfortable. There was the mother sunk to rest; there were the four children, all so ill, lying asleep and unwatched in the open air that dark night. No, not unwatched; their Heavenly Father and His holy angels were guarding them all.

Mr. Price bent down over each little suffering, sleeping face; he put his hand on each little feverish brow, Selina's, Willie's, Lizzie's, Henry's. But Henry's forehead did not feel hot like the others, it was cold. Little Henry was not asleep as his brothers and sisters were. The angels who had been watching had carried his spirit up to heaven, and he was asleep, as Lazarus was when Jesus said, 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.'

Mrs. Helmore was so very ill that she took no notice when told that her precious boy was dead. In a very few days she and Selina joined him in heaven. Mrs. Price's little baby also died, and several men who had gone with the missionaries as servants.

Lizzie and Willie recovered, and Mr. Helmore grew better, and hoped still to continue his work. But one day, when he thought himself well enough, he paid a visit to Sekeletu, and returned very tired and ill. From this second illness there was no getting better. Gradually this faithful missionary grew worse and worse, until he too fell asleep in Jesus.

It was a forlorn little company that Mr. Helmore left behind. There were his two little orphan children, Mrs. Price, who, in consequence of her illness, had lost the use of her feet, and Mr. Price, weak and ill, and full of grief.

Mr. Helmore had begged his friend to take Lizzie and Willie to the Cape, and see them safely into a ship which would carry them across the ocean to their friends in England. Indeed, what could any of them do except try and reach some friends? Mr. and Mrs. Price were too ill to remain in such a country as Sekeletu's, with any hope of living long, and they could do no good as missionaries unless they were well.

Therefore Mr. Price began at once to prepare for returning to Kuruman. Mrs. Price could not help at all, and her husband was too weak to walk alone. Yet he must do everything that had to be done. He found someone to carry or lead him from box to box as he packed up; and if he worked for an hour or two one day, it tired him so very much that he was obliged to rest two whole days before he could do anything more.

It was nearly a month before the waggons were ready to begin their journey back. All this time the Makololo

had watched the preparations, and had stolen whatever they could from the poor weak missionary.

One day Mr. Price had taken off his clothes, and was lying down on his bed to rest, when a man walked up and carried away the clothes which he had just taken off. And when Mr. Price was ready to start, and had found men who were willing to drive the oxen, Sekeletu came and took away Mr. Helmore's waggon, and everything packed in it. Then the guns, and powder and shot, the tents and many other things, he sent his men to carry away. The chief knew that Mr. Price was too weak to resist.

It is surprising that these heathen people did not kill Mr. Price; it would have been easy to do so. Perhaps they were afraid that Naké or Mosheté would hear of it if they did, and that the white men would come and punish them.

They certainly wished Mr. Price to die, that they might take all his things. One day a messenger came to the missionary, saying that the chief would have still more goods before he allowed the white man to leave Linyanti. Mr. Price was lying on the ground, so ill that he could hardly move. When he heard the message of the covetous, cruel chief, he answered,—

‘If you do not let me go soon, you will have to bury us by the others.’

‘Well,’ replied the man, ‘you must die somewhere, it may as well be here.’

At last the Makololo allowed Mr. Price to go. Sekeletu himself went with him, riding in Mr. Helmore's waggon, of which he had taken possession. He went only to get still more of the missionary's property.

Not very far from the town there was a river to be crossed. All the packages were taken out of the waggons, and carried by the men over the river, lest they

should get wet, or the waggons be too heavy to be dragged through with them in. The packages, and Mr. and Mrs. Price and the children, crossed the river; they were on one side, and Sekeletu, with the waggons and oxen, was on the other side. Then Sekeletu sent word to Mr. Price that he would not allow the waggons to cross until everything that had belonged to Mr. Helmore was given up. It was quite necessary to have the waggons, if Mr. Price and the children were ever to reach their friends; so all the remainder of Mr. Helmore's things were given up, as well as three cows and some oxen.

At the next river which they reached, Sekeletu behaved still worse. He said he would have all Mr. Price's things before he would allow the waggons to be taken over. The poor man begged hard to have a few comforts left for his sick wife and the two orphan children; and at last the chief consented to his keeping a kaross for the children to sleep upon, bedclothes for Mrs. Price, and just enough garments to cover them. All the corn which had been provided for the drivers, and all the oxen and cows, which were to supply them with milk and food, were taken away.

And now that Sekeletu had robbed the missionary of almost everything, he turned back with his spoils, and left Mr. Price, with his invalid wife, and Willie and Lizzie, to travel the thousand miles back to Kuruman, or to die of want, he did not care which.

You do not wonder that Mrs. Price soon died. Her husband dug her grave under a large tree standing alone upon a wide plain, and buried her there. It had been very painful to see her suffer, but now that she was taken away, although it was to a home where there is no more pain, Mr. Price could not help grieving, he felt so left alone.

It was impossible, too, to travel as far as Kuruman without more help for the journey; he took shelter among the people at Lake N'gami, and there waited for help.

Do you believe that the great and good God sees what takes place on the earth? No doubt He does. God saw the sufferings of His servants at Linyanti. He saw them fall ill and die. He marked Sekeletu's covetous and thievish conduct, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Price and the children in the empty waggon. He saw the grave dug under that lonely, spreading tree. Ah, more than this, the great God, who sees the end from the beginning, had from the first provided help for those of this sad party whom He did not take to their heavenly home.

You remember that Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie had been detained at Kuruman. Mrs. Mackenzie had recovered, and at the very time that Mr. Price was being carried from box to box, and from waggon to waggon, slowly packing up at Linyanti, Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie at Kuruman were also packing up, and starting on their way to the Makololo.

They knew nothing about the sad things which had been happening at Linyanti, but hoped to find their friends all safe and well and happy. An old Bushman whom they met on the road was the first person who told them of the disasters which had befallen the missionaries. Now the Bushmen are not at all truthful, and this once Mr. Mackenzie hoped with all his heart that what the Bushman had told him might not prove to be true.

But at last they came near Lake N'gami, and as the oxen were moving along the banks of a river a party of men stopped the first waggon. Mr. Mackenzie went forward to inquire why they had done so.

The men said, 'Our chief has sent us with canoes to carry you and your goods over the river.'

‘I do not wish to go over the river,’ answered the missionary. ‘I am not going to see your chief.’

‘But,’ replied the men, ‘we have brought the white man with us, your brother.’

Mr. Mackenzie answered, ‘Where is he, then? If you have the white man with you, why do you come without him?’

‘Because he is ill and tired, he remained in the boat,’ said the men.

Still Mr. Mackenzie could not believe. ‘I will go on just as I intended,’ he said. ‘If you really have the white man, bring him to the ford, where we shall sleep to-night and rest to-morrow.’

The men turned away, and Mr. Mackenzie went on his way, but with a very heavy heart. As he walked on thus sadly thinking, suddenly a driver exclaimed,—

‘It is he!’

Mr. Mackenzie sprang towards the trees, among which he saw some one, a white man, approaching. It was Mr. Price. They grasped each other by the hand, but neither of them could speak for a long time.

As soon as it was possible, the waggons were turned round, and Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, with their baby, and Mr. Price, with Mr. Helmore’s children, said farewell to the chief who had so kindly befriended them at Lake N’gami, and journeyed back to Kuruman. There was no want of water on that journey, but the remembrance of their sufferings was strong in the children’s minds.

One night the oxen strayed away, and all the next day the waggons could not move, because the oxen had not yet been brought back to draw them. The children were playing together under the shade of the wagon.

‘Oh, Lizzie,’ said Willie, ‘I am so thirsty! is all the water done?’

‘Be a good boy, Willie,’ answered Lizzie, who was older and wiser. ‘Don’t you know the oxen have strayed, and we are far from water. We are not very thirsty, not so thirsty as when mamma was alive, and could give us no water; we must not ask for any.’

So the children lay still in the shade, and thought they must do without water again all the hot day. But Mr. Mackenzie had heard; he called the children, and poured them out a large cup of water.

‘There is plenty of water for you,’ he said; ‘and when you are even a little thirsty, you may come and have a large drink.’

You will be surprised to hear that after all these troubles Mr. Price hoped to be able to return to Sekeletu’s country, and Mr. Mackenzie also hoped to go there. They felt that he and his people needed missionaries very much; but God never again made the way plain for any missionaries to go to the Makololo.

And now you must not think that Sekeletu was altogether bad, because of what you have heard. He had been, as you know, very kind to Dr. Livingstone,—his dear friend Naké. Dr. Livingstone even left a waggon full of goods in his care for seven years, and then found the things safe,—or rather, they would have been safe and sound, if the white ants had not got to them, and spoiled a good many. Sekeletu and his men had not stolen any of Naké’s things.

Sekeletu did not live very long after this; and after their chief’s death his people fought together so much, and killed each other so much, that they became fewer and fewer, until at last hardly any Makololo were left. They became too few to be called a tribe, or to have a town or a chief, and now no one knows where any of them are. This has been the end of the Mantatees or Makololo, for they were the same people.



CHAPTER XXIV.

DR. LIVINGSTONE ENDS HIS JOURNEYS.



R. LIVINGSTONE had returned to Africa after his visit to England, and he took his wife back to Africa with him.

He went to Linyanti not long after Mr. Price left, but it was too late to do any good, and it was not his fault that he did not arrive sooner. Before he had been in Africa long, his wife was taken ill with fever, and died. This made him very sad. He buried her on the banks of the Zambesi, under a spreading baobab tree, and went on his way more solitary even than when she had been in England. Yet God comforted him, and made him feel always that Jesus was with him, leading him to do a great and important work.

He travelled still for several years, and found out a great many places and tribes which do not belong to this little story. He came to England once again, and again returned to Africa. The black people who travelled with him loved him; they knew too that the English people loved him.

He had been healthy and strong when he began his travels, but by degrees his strength wore out, and he was often very ill.

At last he grew so ill that he was obliged to tell his

men to make a litter and carry him in it. Then he was so ill that he could not bear even to be carried. His black friends laid him down on his bed in a hut, far away from his children and from all his white friends. But God was with him, and comforted him, and made him feel happy and thankful, although he was so ill and so far away in the African forests.

One night he rose from his bed, and knelt by its side praying—praying for his children and friends far away in England, and for the poor Africans around him, so down-trodden, so ignorant, and so wicked. And as he knelt there, the Master whom he had served so faithfully called him. His breath stopped as he heard the call, and he arose to go to Him. Out of the tiny hut, out and away from the vast African forests and swamps, he rose straight to heaven and to Jesus.

When, early in the morning, Dr. Livingstone's servant, Susi, went into his master's hut, no one spoke, no one moved, no one was there. Only the worn-out body, which Dr. Livingstone had left behind, was kneeling at the bedside.

This poor body—all that remained of their master—his black friends dried in the sun, wrapped it up in calico, and then, through many difficulties, carried it to the sea coast.

From the African sea coast the body was brought to England, and was buried, where we bury so many of our greatest and best men, in Westminster Abbey.

His work was ended, but not the work for Christ which he had begun in Africa. Other men have been carrying that work on, and it is growing and spreading faster and faster every year.



CHAPTER XXV.

MISSIONARIES TO MATABELELAND.

WHILE the sad things of which you have heard were happening at Linyanti, how were the missionaries getting on in Matabeleland? At the time when Mr. and Mrs. Helmore's party started for the Makololo country, other waggons were prepared, other goods were packed up, and other missionaries and their wives left Kuruman. They were going to the Matabele, and to the king, Moselekatse; and Mr. Moffat was going with them as their leader.

Let us now follow this party and their six waggons. On, on, on trudged the oxen, resting by night and journeying by day, until they all arrived within the Matabele country, and within forty miles of the chief's town. By this time the oxen were falling ill of a disease which often kills immense numbers of cattle in Africa. Mr. Moffat could not take his sick animals amongst the vast herds of Moselekatse; so he sent a messenger forward to say his oxen were ill, and ought to come no farther, and ask what Moselekatse would wish him to do.

As an answer to this message, Moselekatse ordered eighty of his warriors to go and drag the waggons all the forty miles to his presence. A strange idea, was it

not? But the warriors went,—shields, and spears, and all,—and drove a number of oxen to feed themselves on the way.

One day, after they reached the waggons, was spent in preparation; and the next, taking hold of the oxen's yokes, away they started. Up the hills, down the valleys, over streams and bushes and stones, and sometimes into holes, out of which it was no easy matter to pull the waggons again. Still it was managed, and done cheerfully too, with a wild war-song now and then, to make the way easy.

They did not get on very fast, however. The eighty warriors could not draw all the six waggons at once, and so were obliged to take first three for a few miles, and then return for the other three. Their spears and shields were hung up all over the outsides of the waggons, and Mr. Moffat's waggon was adorned with about three times as many as either of the others. The warriors hung no less than fifty shields on his waggon, besides a great many spears.

One of the waggons pleased the men very much. It was a new one brought for their chief, and was much lighter to drag along than those generally used by African travellers.

This was the first time the Matabele people had ever seen a white woman, so doubtless Mrs. John Moffat and Mrs. Thomas were very much stared at. The ladies, too, must have looked with wondering eyes at their strange escort.

The travellers found the chief at a small cattle outpost, where they were very graciously received. He promised soon to show them the piece of land on which they might settle, but put off doing so from day to day. Mr. Moffat, of course, was not pleased; and if he had

not been very wise, most likely he and Moselekatse would have quarrelled. The fact was, that the chief knew how often other white men followed missionaries into a new country, and how, sometimes, the white men even conquered the people, and took possession of the countries into which they went. No wonder that this made Moselekatse afraid to have missionaries; and if it had not been for Mr. Moffat's patience, very likely they would all have had to go away again.

At last, after a month's delay, Moselekatse sent some of his headmen to conduct Mosheté and the other missionaries to the piece of land he had selected for them, and which he hoped they would like.

They would indeed have been hard to please if this piece of land had not satisfied them. It was a beautiful valley, through which flowed a clear stream. The land on either side of the stream was covered with rich grass, and the hills around were well wooded. Plenty of water, plenty of grass, plenty of wood, a pure, healthy air—could a pleasanter spot have been chosen for a missionary station?

The missionaries told the chief how pleased they were, and as soon as possible set about building houses at Inyati, which was the name of the valley in which they were allowed to settle.

Mr. Moffat remained in Matabeleland a whole year. There were many things to arrange with the king before he could well leave the new missionaries,—things that you would never think of without being told.

For instance, Moselekatse believed that Mosheté himself was a great chief, but these other missionaries, he thought, were only common white men. He thought that when they came to see him they should do as his common soldiers did—that they should crouch down on

the ground, and come forward, without standing upright, shouting his praises all the time: 'O great elephant! O mighty king!' and so on. Of course the missionaries would not do this, and it had to be arranged that they might come to the chief, walking in English fashion, and greet him by bowing and shaking hands.

Next the question arose, Were the teachers to sit upon stools before Moselekatse? In all Matabeleland the chief was the only man who had the honour of sitting on a chair; not even his greatest headmen would sit upon anything but the ground, for, said they, 'Moselekatse alone sits on a stool.' But the missionaries had always been used to chairs: must they give them up and always squat on the ground? It was at last decided that they might still use the camp-stools they had brought with them, and sit upon them even in the king's presence.

After a time it was settled that the missionaries and all white men were to be treated as sons of Moselekatse, and after that the missionaries were often called 'Children of the King.'

When the white men visited the chief in his own kraal, they were allowed to sit beside him, his headmen and officers came next, then his children, while the common soldiers squatted some distance off, and two or three of his wives stood behind his chair to wait upon him.

Whoever was with the chief at four o'clock in the afternoon had the honour of dining with him. In the early morning, the ox which was to be eaten for dinner in the chief's kraal was killed, and it was stewed gently all day until dinner-time. At four o'clock, a piece of this stewed beef was put upon the king's plate, and brought to him. This plate was always kept near him, and was never washed, lest it should be bewitched.

Moselekatse had a knife, and any white man who visited him might use a knife, but no one else.

As soon as their king was served, the cooks carried round large dishes of beef, handing the meat first to the principal man. He would take up a large joint with both hands, with his teeth he would try how large a piece he could tear off, and pass the lump on to his next neighbour. So the beef would go round and round, till every joint was finished, and all the dishes were empty. How would you have liked to dine with Moselekatse? Those who had the best teeth had the best chance of plenty.

After the beef came the beer, and then those who could drink the most enjoyed themselves the most.

Mr. Moffat said farewell for the last time to his old friend, and returned to Kuruman, but the missionaries whom he left behind at Inyati soon found that the chief did not wish his people to learn God's Word.

Sometimes he was very kind to them, for he felt they were his friends. When he was ill they often gave him medicine which made him better; and they could make him many useful things. Mosheté, too, who was their chief, was a very great chief indeed; the king felt it would be wiser not to quarrel with them, but he did not want to hear their message.

'We Matabele like many wives,' he would say, when asked why he did not obey God's Word, and he would say nothing more. So Moselekatse kept his many wives, and his dirty, savage, heathen ways as long as he could.

But the day came when Moselekatse was to die. The missionaries had been with him for several years, and he had long been feeble and ill. The medicine that was given him did him good no longer. One day Mr. Sykes went to see him. The king could only look lovingly at

his friend, and stammer out in a feeble voice, 'I am very ill.' He was very ill, and Mr. Sykes spoke kind words to him, and wished to comfort him. The thought of Jesus did not comfort him, for he had not learned to love his Saviour. When Mr. Sykes told him that his old friend, Mosheté, sent his love, and that at Kuruman they were still praying for him, the poor suffering face lighted up once more. Yes, Mosheté was his friend always, and he loved Mosheté still, but he was too ill now even to say that. He turned his face away, the missionary left him, and saw him no more.

In a very few weeks after this Moselekatse died. His wives wrapped his body in his rugs and blankets, and his headmen buried him in a mountain cave.





CHAPTER XXVI.

DR. MOFFAT'S LAST DAYS.



ONE day Mr. Moffat sat down and wrote a letter to a friend in England. He had just returned from Matabeleland, and was weary and tired.

‘These constant journeys,’ he wrote, ‘make me feel like those who confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. I am sad and ashamed when I think how little I have done for Him who loved me, and gave His life for me. What is there on earth worth living for, except Christ and His kingdom?’

Mr. and Mrs. Moffat were no longer young and active, as they had been. Their children had grown up, and one, and another, and another had married, and left them for homes of their own.

Dr. Livingstone had, as you know, married the eldest, Mary. Mr. Price, after he returned from his sad journey to the Makololo, asked Bessie Moffat to be his wife. Ann married a French missionary, and went with him to her new home at Motito. Jane was the only one left at the old home.

Many sad things also happened to the old missionary and his wife. Their eldest son, Robert, died, and just before his death, Mary, Dr. Livingstone's wife, was called home. Out from the forest jungle, where she was

travelling with her husband, she was taken to the light and brightness of her Father's house above.

Then Ann's husband was killed in a very sad manner. One day a trader, named Nelson, arrived at Motito. He was not worthy of the name he bore. He made himself drunk, and behaved in such a shameful manner that even the native heathen were ashamed, and ordered him out of the town. The missionary and some of the headmen thought he ought to be punished, and went to the waggon to compel him to come and be judged. Nelson waited until they were all round the waggon; then, seeing that he could not escape, he set fire to a barrel of gunpowder, and blew them all up, himself with them.

Such things as this made Mr. and Mrs. Moffat very sad, and no wonder. It was not so much because the children they had loved were quite gone from the old home. Those who were alive on earth were Christians like their father and mother, and were working for the same Master in heaven; and those who had been called away from earth were with Jesus in 'their happy, happy, home in heaven;' and to the aged missionary and his wife this home did not 'seem so very far away.'

What often made their hearts sad, was the sin and wickedness they still saw around them. There was still so much left that, often in looking back, Mr. Moffat felt as though he had done very, very little.

But there were such changes at Kuruman that other people felt he had, through God's blessing, done much, very much.

You would have understood something of the changes, could you have been at Kuruman, when at last the day came for Mr. and Mrs. Moffat to say good-bye to their friends there.

The last Sunday came, and the church, in which the

missionary had so often spoken of God's love, while the dark faces were upturned towards him, was full of sad and loving people. They had been children when he came to Kuruman, and he had taught them to read their Bibles ; they were men and women now, and had children who were learning in the schools.

Many of them had given their hearts to Jesus, and were His loving followers, but not all. How earnestly once more, and for the last time, he prayed those who were not Christians indeed, to turn to God with all their hearts ; how lovingly he blessed those—and they were many—who were his joy and crown, because he had been the means of bringing them to Jesus.

So the farewell was said to the missionary work. Then, after that last Sunday, came the packing up ; the last directions to those who were to carry on the work ; last visits to the people in their homes, to the children in the schools, to the orchard he had planted, to the garden he had tended, to the plants he had reared, to the rooms in which he and his wife and children had lived together ; and on the Friday, the aged missionary and his wife for the last time walked out at the door of their house together.

A waggon was standing there, out in the road-way, the oxen were yoked, the driver was ready. And between the door and the waggon was a crowd of dark, loving friends, pressing round with outstretched hands for the last touch, waiting with tearful eyes for the last look. The waggon drove away, followed closely by all who could walk, wailing aloud for the dear and faithful friends they would see no more on earth.

Mr. Moffat, when he came to England this second time was known as Dr. Moffat. He received this title soon after he reached England. His friends here were

as glad to see him and do him honour, as his friends in Africa were sorry to say good-bye to him.

Mrs. Moffat did not live long after she reached England; the next year she was taken to heaven; and her last thoughts on earth were of her old Bechuana home, and the coming of Christ's kingdom there, 'till her eyes closed to be opened again on the sight of the Saviour, whom she had loved so long, and served so faithfully.'

Mr. Moffat lived on yet a while. Although he had lost his wife, he had loving children and grandchildren to care for him, and gladden his heart; and Jesus was always with him. He could still do something for his old Bechuana friends. He went over his translation of the Old Testament again, and had it reprinted, and sent out to Kuruman. He spoke to a great many meetings of Christians, in England and Scotland, about the needs of the Africans, and stirred up a good many people to do more for them and their missionaries.

Many people loved and honoured him. The Queen wanted to shake hands with him, and asked him to come and see her at Osborne. He stood in Westminster Abbey when the body of his son-in-law, Dr. Livingstone, was brought there to be buried; and then his thoughts must have gone backwards to the large spreading baobab tree where his daughter Mary had been laid more than ten years before, and onwards to the day when he should meet her, and her mother, and her husband, in heaven.

While Dr. Moffat was spending his last years in England, a war broke out in Bechuanaland. The natives were afraid that the white men intended to take possession of their country, and resolved to drive them all away.

So many white men had come into the country it was no wonder they were afraid of losing their land altogether. Farmers had come, who settled on the land. Hunters

had come to hunt their wild animals, — elephants, ostriches, lions, panthers, zebras, and antelopes. Traders had come to buy feathers, skins, and ivory, and to sell to the people in exchange many English things they were learning to want,—calicoes, tea, sugar, looking-glasses, ploughs, and even chairs and tables. Other traders had come, and they sold bad rum and brandy, which the people liked, but it did them even more harm than the native beer.

At one place, called Kimberley, diamonds had been found, and then, of course, a great many white men went there, hoping to find diamonds and grow rich. When the opportunity came, the native tribes rose up, and did all they could to get rid of the white men who had invaded their land. They spared the missionaries, but a great many farmers and traders were killed, and the land was full of bloodshed and war.

But the Bechuanas had little chance in fighting against the white men. Their chiefs quarrelled too much among themselves, to join together and make one very strong army against the soldiers from the Cape; and the English rifles soon frightened them, and made them run away. Instead of getting rid of the white men, the white men conquered the Bechuanas, and all their land was taken under the protection of the English Government.

Just after these war troubles, a servant of one of Moselekatse's sons came to England, with an African chief whom the English had taken prisoner. How pleased he was to see Mr. Moffat! In far-away Matabeleland he had often heard of Mosheté, and of his visits to his king; now, here in England, the black man and the missionary actually met.

‘Are you Mosheté?’ he said. ‘Are you Mosheté? I see this day what my eyes never expected to see.’

It was indeed strange that this black man should first

see Dr. Moffat in England, after they had both been so many years in Africa.

Mr. Moffat went to Scotland, and visited once again the place where he had lived with his mother when he was a boy. There were great changes there. Almost all his old friends were dead; but one old Scotchwoman was ready to welcome him. When she heard he was in Carronshore, she ran to him, seized him by both hands, and stood speechless, gazing into his face.

‘Are you really the great Moffat?’ she at last gasped out.

‘I think I must be the person you mean,’ replied Dr. Moffat; ‘but why do you ask?’

‘Why? Because I was at the schule wi’ ye, and you’ll surely come to mind me. I sat in the class next ye, and ye helped me wi’ my lesson. I was aye sure ye’d come back some day. I didna expect ye the noo, but I’m fair daft wi’ joy at seeing ye!’

It was a pleasure to Dr. Moffat to see old Mary Kay, and all his loving friends, but he was waiting for the time when he should be called to see the Friend he loved best of all. His grandchildren often sang to him songs about Jesus, and he loved to hear them. One Sunday evening, in the brightness of summer-time, they sang to him a hymn he loved well,—this is one of the verses which they sang—

I’ve wrestled on toward heaven,
 ‘Gainst storm, and wind, and tide;
Now, like a weary traveller
 That leaneth on his guide,
Amid the shades of evening,
 While sinks life’s lingering sand,
I hail the glory dawning
 From Immanuel’s land.

And before the next Sunday came he had left them;—the end of the journey had come, and God had called him into the light and glory of Immanuel’s land for ever and ever.



CHAPTER XXVII.

SEKHOME AND HIS SON, KHAMA.

AFTER the troubles at Linyanti, Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Price went as missionaries to the chief town of the Bamangwato, called Shoshong. Mr. Price did not stay there very long; he moved in a year or two to Sechele's town, but Mr. Mackenzie remained for several years, and has written an account of what happened while he was with the Bamangwato.

Shoshong is about halfway between Kuruman and Matabeleland. Dr. Livingstone had been there, Mr. Moffat had been there, and a native teacher from Kuruman had lived in the town, besides some German missionaries.

So at Shoshong the people had already heard the Word of God. Sekhome, the chief, had heard and knew a great deal about the Bible, but he never became a Christian.

'Why do you not enter the Word of God, Sekhome?' the missionary asked him one day.

'Monare,' he replied, 'you know not what you say. The Word of God is far from me. To enter the Word of God would be to me like going out on the plain, and meeting the warriors of Moselekatse without any one to help me. I cannot enter the Word of God.'

‘It is very good for you white men to follow the Word of God,’ he said. ‘God made you with straight hearts, like this,’ and Sekhome held out his finger straight; ‘but he made us with crooked hearts, like this,’ and he bent his finger, to show Mr. Mackenzie what he meant. ‘Now, when a black man tells a story, he goes round and round—so,’ and Sekhome drew some rounds on the sandy floor; ‘but when you open your mouth, your tale comes in a straight line—so,’ and he made a straight line right through the curves. ‘Your hearts are white always; the hearts of black people are black and bad.’

‘No,’ answered Mr. Mackenzie; ‘white people have bad hearts as well as black people; but everybody who turns to God gets a new heart.’

‘Not black people,’ said the chief; ‘and yet—and yet—perhaps Khama’s heart is right. Yes,’ he said, ‘Khama’s heart is straight.’

And who was Khama, of whom the chief said, ‘His heart is straight’? Khama was his own eldest son. Khama had heard God’s Word, and had received it. ‘Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee,’ was the word which he had heard, and he obeyed and followed it,

Mr. Mackenzie built himself a house at Shoshong, in which he, his wife, and their children lived for three years, before they could get a better one. Poles were stuck up in the ground, as near to each other as possible, and were covered with plaster both inside and out. The house was thatched with reeds, and divided into three rooms. The windows in the rooms were just holes covered with calico, for they had no glass with which to make proper windows. The wind could never be prevented from blowing in through the calico; and the

little rooms must have been very dull, for no one could see out except when the door was open.

Khama, and his brother Khamana, who was also a Christian, often came to the missionary's house, and learned many good and useful things from him, besides helping him to teach the children who came to the mission school.

Not long after Mr. Mackenzie was settled at Shoshong hunters and traders brought news that the savage warriors of Moselekatse were on their way to attack the town. One morning, as the missionary came from the school with Khama and Khamana, a messenger ran, all breathless and excited, into the *khotla*. 'The Matabele were very near,' he said; 'some of the cattle had already fallen into their hands.'

Sekhome at once sent a man up the rocks that overlooked the town, and there, loud and shrill, was raised the war-cry of the Bamangwato. Through all the town the cry was heard, and the men at once came streaming into the *khotla* with their guns, their spears or assegais, and their ox-hide shields.

All was bustle and preparation directly. Messengers were sent to collect the cattle from the different grazing grounds, and to send them with their herdsmen up the mountains. Spies went to find out where the Matabele really were, and how many were coming. The women and children, and all who were too old or feeble to fight, were ordered up into the mountains for safety; and soon a long stream of old men and of women and children were to be seen defiling up the narrow mountain paths, the women carrying bundles on their heads, and babies on their backs, and urging on the other children as best they could.

Sekhome collected his warriors together, examined

their weapons, particularly their guns, and saw that all was ready for the fight. As he returned from doing this, he stopped at Mr. Mackenzie's house.

'Ah,' he said, laughing, 'do you intend helping us to fight against the Matabele?'

'No,' answered Mr. Mackenzie. 'White teachers do not fight; they are the friends of all.'

'What will you do then,' said the chief, 'when the Matabele come? They will not see the colour of your skin in the dark.'

In the evening, Khama and some of his Christian companions came to the mission house, and in front of it, in the clear moonlight that was lying calm about them, they prayed with the missionary, that their Father in heaven would help them in defending their homes and families. And while Khama was asking God to fight for them, his father was trying by charms and incantations to bewitch his enemies. Sekhome was a sorcerer, and a very learned witch doctor.

Khama not only prayed, he acted too. He was sorry to see that Mrs. Mackenzie and the little white children were still in the town, and said to the missionary, 'Let Ma Willie go to the mountain beside my mother; then the Matabele will reach her only when we are all killed.'

As soon as morning dawned, Mrs. Mackenzie and the children went up the mountain, and joined the crowds of natives there. It was not at all pleasant in the mountains. There were many hyenas and panthers about, which made Mrs. Mackenzie afraid for the children; but it was safer near these wild beasts than near the Matabele. They had no hut nor tent to sleep in, but their mother hung a kaross over a bush to make a little shelter for the children. Then, too, it came on to rain heavily, and

mother and children had to get as close as possible together, and even then could not keep themselves dry.

Khama and Khamana grew tired of their father's charms and incantations, and told him so. 'It would be better,' they said, 'to go out and fight the Matabele, instead of waiting for them to come into the town. May we go?' Their father gave them permission; and these two young Christian chiefs went out with their men, and bravely fought against the Matabele warriors in the open plain. They drove the Matabele back so much that they never ventured into the town at all; and so God answered the prayers that had been offered on that moonlight night, and spared the homes and families of Shoshong.

It was a week and more before it was thought safe for the women and children to come down the mountains, and then they found that their enemies had destroyed the grain that they had grown in the gardens around Shoshong, and that the Matabele had eaten the water-melons they hoped to have enjoyed; while great quantities of cattle, that had not escaped in time to the mountains, had been driven off to Matabeleland.

The people did not starve, however. The Bamangwato are good hunters, and have large hunting grounds; and in their gardens the women set to work to repair the mischief done, while the men did their best to get food by hunting.

Soon after this war, Sekhome, in revenge, sent a party of his men to steal cattle from the Matabele. He did not tell the missionary nor Khama what he had done; for he was sure they would not approve. His warriors came back to the town victorious, driving the stolen cattle before them, and then the spoil had to be divided. A share was set aside for Khama, because he was the

chief's eldest son; but Khama would not add the cows and oxen to his herds. 'They are stolen,' he said; and would have nothing to do with them.

Sekhome was right when he said that his son Khama had a straight heart.

But Sekhome himself had a very crooked heart.

Khama and his brother Khamana were Christians, and were forsaking heathen customs. They had each married one wife, and they would not take any more. Their father, Sekhome, had twelve wives, whose huts all stood in a semicircle round the hut in which the chief lived with his mother. Now Sekhome said to Khama,—

'Your wife, Mabese, is not to be your chief wife. I have purchased for you the daughter of another of my headmen, and given many cows to her father for her.'

But Khama replied, 'It shall not be so. I refuse, because of the Word of God, to take a second wife. Send me to hunt elephants for ivory, or tell me how I may serve and obey you, while I also obey God's Word. This thing I may not do. Mabese is my wife, and shall remain my only wife.'

And Khamana, who had married Mabese's sister, said the same.

Then Sekhome made up his mind to kill both these sons of his, and all the young men who were following the Word of God. One night he called some of his men, and ordered them to bring their guns and fire.

'Where are we to fire?' they asked.

'Here, on these huts,' said Sekhome.

The men lowered their guns; for once they would not obey their chief, for the huts to which he pointed were the homes of Khama and Khamana.

Then Sekhome, in his anger, loaded a double-barrelled rifle himself, to shoot his sons. But one of his headmen

took the rifle from him, and Sekhome saw that the hearts of the people were with his children and the Christians.

What was he to do now? As Khama and Khamana had not been killed, he expected that in revenge they would at once try to kill him. He ran away and hid behind his mother's hut, awaiting the arrival of his angry sons. He need not have been afraid; Khama and Khamana had no wish to kill their father.

Khama's heart was straight. Did not Sekhome know it? Yes. But Sekhome did not understand straight hearts; his own heart was very crooked.

He drove his two sons, and the father of their wives, out of the town. They took refuge upon the mountains with their followers, and there Sekhome fought against them, and still tried to kill them.

At last Khama was allowed to return to the town; but his father did not forgive him, and was resolved that he should never be chief, nor rule in Shoshong.

Sekhome ought not to have been chief himself; there was a brother of his who ought to have been chief. This brother, named Macheng, had been a prisoner among the Matabele, and was at this time living in Sechele's town.

Now Sekhome sent for him, and told him he might be chief if only he would kill Khama. Macheng came, and a grand meeting was called in the *khotla* to welcome him. Sekhome told the people he had called his brother, Macheng, home from exile, and that he was their chief. The headmen rose one after the other, and made polite speeches, hardly knowing what to think.

At last Khama rose, and spoke to Macheng.

'Chief,' he said, 'I alone must speak unpleasant words to you this day. The Bamangwato say they are glad to see you here. I am not glad. If Sekhome could not live in peace with his own sons, but shot at us, will he

live in peace with you? will he obey you? If there would be peace in the town, I would say I was glad to see you, but there will be no peace. Two chiefs cannot sit in one *khotla*. I am sorry, Macheng, that I cannot welcome you to Shoshong.'

Did Khama know that Macheng had undertaken to kill him? Yes, he knew; but he was not going to be false or crooked-hearted, even though it might save his life.

Before the meeting broke up, Macheng rose from his seat, and said, 'Many speeches have been made to me this day. I have heard them all with my ears. One speech, and one only, has reached my heart; and that is the speech of Khama. I thank Khama for his speech.'

Soon after this Macheng said to Sekhome, 'You called me from the Bakwena to kill your sons. My heart refuses to do this. They are your sons, not mine; if you wish them killed, kill them yourself. Only the Christians in this town say what is true.'

Thus Sekhome was disappointed in all his plots against Khama and Khamana. Macheng became the friend of the young chiefs, and of the missionary also; while in the end, Sekhome was himself driven from Shoshong, and became an exile in a distant place. This was the end of his crooked and wicked ways.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

KHAMA, CHIEF OF THE BAMANGWATO.

THE day came when Macheng died, and when the Christian Khama was made chief. That was a happy day for the Bamangwato, especially for those in the town who had become Christians, and were trying to live as Jesus would have us live.

Khama's heart was as straight to do right as it had been in the days of the quarrel with his father. His wife, Mabese, too, was a Christian woman, who prayed herself, and tried humbly and constantly to teach the other women what was right. There was peace in the chief's home, there was peace in his heart; there was peace in the town.

Khama had given up native charms, rainmakers, witchcraft, and all such things. Since he had become a Christian, he had had nothing to do with these heathen follies, and now he tried to do away with them in Shoshong. He neither smoked nor used snuff, as so many did, and he would have nothing to do with strong drink.

The native beer, which the Africans brew, he resolved should not be made in his town if he could prevent it; and the rum and brandy, which the white traders brought

into Shoshong, he was quite determined should not be sold to his people, to make them drunk and mad.

‘When I was quite a lad,’ Khama said, ‘I used to think how I should govern my town, and what sort of a kingdom it should be. I quite made up my mind not to have strong drink in the town. I would not rule over a drunken town and people.’ Wise Khama!

When Khama found that a great many white men came to Shoshong selling drink, and that they were doing themselves, and his people also, a great deal of harm, he called a meeting of the traders, and told them what he wished,—to have no strong drink sold or given away in Shoshong.

‘But,’ said they, ‘we have a lot of cases of brandy just outside the town now. It is our medicine, you must let us have it.’

‘If it is your medicine,’ replied Khama, ‘you may bring in the small cases, but not the large casks, and I must see no drunkenness.’

‘Of course,’ said the men, ‘you shall not see any one the worse for drink.’

The cases were brought in, and very soon some of the white men were tipsy.

One day Khama was down by the river. A trader on the other side wanted boats to go over, to bring him and his goods across. But among the goods was a cask of brandy. Khama refused to let the boats go; he would not have the trader with the cask of brandy in his town. He walked back from the river, and again he had the white men called together.

‘I have refused to let a white man with a cask of brandy come into the town this day,’ he said to them. ‘And now know, all of you, I will have no drink brought into the town.’

‘What! none?’ they said. ‘May we not have any brandy or rum, or even beer at our meals?’

‘No,’ replied Khama; ‘I will have none in the town.’

One trader, who had kept an inn for a great many years, tried hard to make the chief change his mind.

‘Do you venture to speak?’ said Khama; ‘you, who have broken your promise to me? No drink shall come in. I have said it.’

But the innkeeper was determined to get brandy, and to sell it too. Did not his gain depend upon it? He pretended to be very kind to the people, to be very concerned because the corn had run short, and so many of them were wanting food. He said he had bought a waggon-load of corn. It had cost him a great deal of money to get it, and bring it to Shoshong, but the poor people were needing food, and he would sell them the corn cheap. So this waggon-load was driven into Shoshong, and unloaded at the inn.

A few days after, a waggon started from the town. Presently one of the drivers fell from his seat, and was crushed to death by the wheels. He was drunk; but where did he get the drink?

The trader with his waggon went on his way. But by and by he began to rave like a madman, and shoot his oxen, and the people who were with him. He was drunk, and mad with drink. He left the waggon, and in this sad state ran among some Bushmen, who, to save their own lives, killed him.

The account of all this was soon brought to Khama. But where had the men got this bad brandy? Ah, those bags of corn were really casks of brandy, covered and hidden. The innkeeper was found out, and, rather than face Khama’s just anger, he quickly left the town. He knew the chief would no longer have him there.

This is a sad story. Perhaps you wonder you are told about this wickedness. Sad to say, wherever English people go, this drink story goes with them.

Khama tried again and again to prevent the traders drinking themselves, or giving drink to his people; and at last he made up his mind that all those who smuggled drink into Shoshong should be sent away. Again he called them together.

‘I am black,’ he said, ‘but I am chief in my own country, and you despise and insult me, because of my colour. When the white men rule here, you will be able to do what you like. Now I am chief. Go away, back to your own country. Take all your things,—take the iron roofs off your houses, and go. I want only friends in this town. To-day I make an end of it. Go; take your cattle, leave the town, and never come back.’

Then he called his own people together, and told them they were no more to brew the native beer. ‘We pray to God for corn,’ he told them, ‘and then you take it, and turn it into stuff which makes you wicked.’

He knew his men would not like this, but he said that he was quite determined. They might kill him, but they would not conquer him. The people were wise enough not to kill their chief. They knew he was right; and if beer has been made in Shoshong since, it must have been done secretly, and hidden away, lest Khama should know and punish.

Khama’s heart was straight still. He had set himself to do what he knew was right, and to fight against all that he saw was wrong.

Another wrong in his town and country, against which Khama set himself, was slavery. His people had many bondmen, who dwelt in the land around, poor and oppressed. These people had been conquered in war,

and in times past had been ill-used, down-trodden slaves.

Khama set all the slaves free. He gave them land on which they could grow corn for themselves; and he gave them goats, that they might have milk and food for themselves and their children. The love of Christ in the heart of their chief had brought better and happier times to them.

In times past, when the slaves spoke to their masters, they would call themselves 'your dog,' and were often worse treated than the dogs. Now they had gardens and cattle of their own, like other men, and the missionary would hear them say, 'And I—I am a person. Khama, when he sees me, says, "*Motho on me.*"' The English of that is, 'One of my people.'

These are some of the good things which straight-hearted Khama has done for his people.





CHAPTER XXIX.

KHAMA SENDS GOD'S WORD TO MOREMBI—THE
MATABELE FOLLOW.



HE Christian Bamangwato, with Khama at their head, are not keeping the good things they have learned to themselves. They are doing all they can in teaching those who are still ignorant in the town about them, and they are even helping to send God's Word to other tribes and towns.

You remember that when Mr. Price escaped from Linyanti, he went to Lake N'gami, and there Mr. Mackenzie met him. The people about Lake N'gami had heard the good tidings of a loving Father and tender Saviour, and wished much that the teachers would remain with them, and tell them more. But this could not be. Lake N'gami is in so unhealthy a part of the country, that it was almost certain that any missionary who tried to remain there would very soon die.

At last, however, the day came when the wish of the people was to be granted. Thirteen years had passed away, the old chief was dead, and the new chief, whose name was Morembi, resolved at once to get a teacher. He said he wished to build his town, as Khama had done, on the Word of God.

He sent messengers to Khama, asking the chief to send him a Christian teacher and books.

Mr. Mackenzie had left Shoshong to do other work before this time, and Mr. Hepburn was now Khama's missionary. Khama went to Mr. Hepburn, and asked him to go to the chief Morembi with teachers, and all that was needed.

How pleased the people at Lake N'gami were to see a missionary among them once more, and to hear that he meant to stay with them for a little while! The chief Morembi was away hunting, but there were plenty of the Batuanas at home to welcome the teachers, and to listen to the good tidings they had to tell.

A great many people at once set to work to learn their letters; that did not take them long. Then came words made of letters. Oh, how hard they worked at them! Mr. Hepburn was quite surprised to find how quickly they learned, and how soon they were able to read the New Testament.

But these quick learners were the young people. When people get old, they cannot learn fast. There were men and women who had wanted to learn for many, many years, and now they were old. Their eyes could not see the little letters, their heads could not remember what the words meant.

The chief's uncle tried hard to learn, and could not.

'What am I to do? What am I to do?' he cried. 'My eyes are old and will not learn. If the teachers had come when I was young, I would have learned fastest of all, but now I can never learn. It is too late.'

What he said was quite true; it was too late for him to learn to read. What was to be done? He had two wives; he brought them to Mr. Hepburn and said,—

'Teach them to read; they are young, and they must be my eyes.'

When Mr. Hepburn returned to Shoshong, he left

behind him the two native teachers. They had been trained in the schools at Kuruman, and were good Christian men, and, being natives, were not so likely to suffer from fever as white men.

Three years passed away, and then the Christians at Shoshong made up their minds to pay a visit to the people at the lake once more. Four Christian men from the church were chosen to go, and they asked Mr. Hepburn to go with them.

Khama and his Christian headmen supplied everything that was necessary for the journey. Waggons, oxen, drivers, stores of food, everything they could think of that was needed. And then they had a prayer-meeting in the church, and asked God to take care of the travellers through all the dangers of the way, and to bless them, and the people to whom they were going.

When the travellers reached the lake, the Batuanas were delighted to see their visitors, and Mr. Hepburn and his Christian companions were very pleased to find that a great many of the people had learned to read. A great many, too, had left their heathen ways, and were living like Christians. Morembi, his mother, and his wife, all said they believed in Jesus, and wished to do only what He commanded. It looked as though the town were indeed being built upon the Word of God.

But sad times were coming to the Batuanas.

They had been at peace, they had been learning to read, and to worship God and love Jesus. They were learning to be industrious, and so their cattle and goods had increased. They had many things which it was pleasant to have, but they had wicked, cruel neighbours, ready to steal and destroy.

The Matabele cast their greedy, covetous eyes upon the increasing herds of the Batwana. It was a long

distance to send a Matabele army,—two hundred and fifty miles,—but the cattle were worth the trouble, even if they did not secure many prisoners; so, in spite of all that the missionaries in Matabeleland could say or do to prevent it, an army of warriors was sent. All that two hundred and fifty miles they marched across the country, and fell upon the Batwana town.

The people had just time to remove a great deal of their cattle, and some of their goods, and hide them in the swamps where the Matabele would not easily get at them,—but this was all.

Their gardens and their homes were left to the plunderers; everything was destroyed and burnt. And when the Matabele had collected as much cattle as possible, and as many prisoners as they could take with them, they began their march home in triumph.

The women and little children who had fallen into their hands they did not care to take. They killed them in heaps, leaving them thus for their husbands and fathers to find and wail over, if they had escaped, and were still alive.

A great many prisoners died on that sad march, a great many cattle dropped on the way, to be eaten by the wild beasts. But the Matabele drove to their own land as many as twelve thousand oxen, besides sheep and horses, a waggon full of ivory, and a large number of slaves.

There were many sad sights to be seen during that cruel raid. The savage warriors caught one slave, cut off both his arms, and sent him, all bleeding and dying, back to his master. One woman they killed, and instead of killing her little baby, they wounded it badly, and threw it down on the ground, to crawl back, crying, to its dead mother.

After this, the chief Morembi began to think more

about training his men as warriors, and getting them armed with good rifles, in case they should be attacked again.

You do not wonder at that. No; surely God intended him to do all he could to defend himself and his people against such enemies. But he did not pray to God with a straight heart, as Khama had done. He had hoped God's Word would be a charm, very strong and powerful, to keep his enemies away; now he went quite back to the old heathen customs and charms.

In two years the Matabele set out once more to attack the Batwana.

The huts had been built again, the gardens were again laid out, and full of fruits and vegetables. At the cattle stations again there were plenty of cattle, and, though the people were not so many as they had been, there were still a great many to be caught and killed, or to be carried away as slaves.

But this time the Batwana were better prepared.

Again the Matabele burned and destroyed the town and gardens; again they killed a number of people most savagely and cruelly; but this time they did not return to their own land rich with cattle and slaves.

The Batuanas had fled to an island in a river near. On the top of the weeds, which grew so thick in the water, they had made a bridge—not at all a strong one. But they had crossed safely, and there they were, peeping out from among the tall reeds on the island, watching their enemies burn their town.

Soon the Matabele found them out; and very carefully they began to come over the frail bridge, in order to attack the Batuanas in their hiding-place, and fight them among the reeds and swamps of the island.

But the Batuanas had good rifles now, and had learned to use them. Quick and sharp fell the shots upon the

naked Matabele. They had not expected this; they became frightened, and ran back.

But there was only that frail bridge by which they could escape, as the Batuanas, with their rifles, pressed after them. So many rushed upon the bridge that it gave way; and those who fell into the water were kept down by those who came behind.

Many, many were drowned, and many were killed by the rifle shots. Many, too, died of their wounds afterwards; and for miles along the river banks, where they had fled, were afterwards found mounds and heaps, under which they had buried their dead.

From this story you will have learned that the Matabele are still savage heathen people. Lobengula, the son of Moselekatse, who became chief after his father's death, has allowed the missionaries to remain in his country, but he has not listened to God's Word, nor does he like his people to do so.

His customs and habits are not much better than his father's were. He sits in a large perambulator to receive his visitors, and takes dinner with them much as his father did. For dress he throws a kaross across his naked body, and his wives stand behind his chair to wait upon him.

Even in Matabeleland, however, there are Christians; perhaps more than any one knows, for if they were known, most likely Lobengula would send his executioners to kill them.

Changes are coming in Matabeleland. Gold has been found there, and in the country beyond, and thousands of white men are going into the country. Lobengula knows he cannot keep them out, he is wiser than to try to do so. Instead of trying to turn the white men back, he is sending his own men to dig for gold also; but the Pearl of great price he is casting away.



CHAPTER XXX.

MOREMBI'S BIBLE.

FROM their last raid against the Batuana the Matabele returned to their own land poorer than they had left it.

Yet, if only they had known it, they were carrying back a treasure. It was a treasure which had been offered to them for years, and which they had despised. One of the soldiers carried home with him a Bible, which had belonged to the chief Morembi.

Morembi could read it, and had read it, but he had thrown it aside. This Bible was taken by the Matabele warrior to his king, Lobengula. The king saw there was something written in the book, and, turning to a trader who was with him, asked him what it was. 'Morembi, chief,' read the trader. Lobengula laughed. He thought it was a charm in which Morembi had trusted, and he, too, threw the book aside.

The warrior, however, was wiser. He knew it was a book such as the missionaries valued; and he carried it away to the mission station, which for many years had been in Matabeleland.

Thus Morembi's Bible found its way into the missionaries' hands, and the first time there was an opportunity it was sent back to Mr. Hepburn, the missionary

at Shoshong, who had, years before, given it to Morembi.

The Christians at Shoshong, and Khama, the Christian chief, had all been very grieved when they heard of the disasters that had befallen the Batuanas, and it was soon arranged that Mr. Hepburn should go and visit them once more.

The news had been brought to Shoshong by traders, or other people who were travelling about the country. Then came the runners from Matabeleland, and they had with them Morembi's Bible, which they left with Mr. Hepburn. All this had taken time. It was nearly two years after the fight when Mr. Hepburn was ready to start from Shoshong and find out how Morembi and his people were getting on.

The Christians at Shoshong again had special meetings to pray that God would bless and prosper the travellers, and then Mr. Hepburn, and two Bamangwato Christians with him, went on their journey.

After a month's travelling, the waggon arrived at the ruins of the old Batwana town, but no Batuanas were living there now. There were plenty of people of other tribes about, poor people who had been their slaves.

And as he looked at these poor creatures, Mr. Hepburn's heart was made sad at the sight. They were so dirty, so wicked, so diseased, so sick; there was hardly any one with a healthy body among them.

And they had thrown away Christ's religion, and had returned to their old heathen customs. Mr. Hepburn tried once more to teach them.

'Have you no books left?' he asked.

'No,' they said. 'The Matabele have destroyed all our books. They have not even left us a goat, so that we cannot buy any from you.'

But they did not wish to buy nor to learn.

‘We are simply lost,’ one young man said.

‘When do you meet to pray?’ asked the missionary.

‘We do not meet for prayer; we do not pray,’ they answered.

‘Are there no Christians left among you?’

‘There is only one in our kraal—a woman.’

Poor Christian woman! Left alone among these sin-sick heathen.

And where were the Batuanas? They had moved away farther among the swamps, the people said, and it would take the teachers ten days longer to get there.

‘And,’ said one man, ‘you will find no Christians till you come to Mokzwati’s village. Mokzwati is a true Christian. You will be glad when you reach his village. When Morembi gave up the white man’s religion, we all gave it up. You will see things that will surprise you when you reach Morembi’s town. I am sorry for you. You will try to persuade him, but you will not be able.’

Mr. Hepburn went on his way with a heavy heart, and reached Morembi’s town weary and sad.

When he entered Morembi’s court, the chief was lying on a mat before a great fire, and his wife was near him with her baby in her arms, while some of his people were about who were waiting upon them.

Morembi did not show much pleasure at the sight of his friend. Was it likely? He exchanged greetings with him, and then, squatting before the fire, listened to what Mr. Hepburn had to say.

The missionary reminded him of all the past,—how he had wished for God’s Word, and it had been sent to him; how he had said he believed in Jesus, and had been baptized—he and his wife, and their little boy. And now—?

Mr. Hepburn stopped to see if Morembi had anything

to say. No; he did not speak. He sat there in front of the fire with his wife.

‘And now—?’

Ah! the rest could be seen. There were heathen charms about their necks; they had returned to their heathen ways.

‘Morembi,’ said the missionary, ‘shall I pray?’

‘Pray if you wish,’ answered Morembi.

And Mr. Hepburn stood and prayed to God for Morembi, his wife, and child; and then went into the cold, dark night, faint and weary and heavy-hearted.

The next day many of the people flocked to the waggon, for they had heard that the missionary was come. The account of what Mr. Hepburn had said to Morembi had been sent to all the headmen even before daylight, and all the morning the people were crowding round, talking about it all.

It was not a pleasant time for Mr. Hepburn. There were still a few Christians in the town, and they used to meet to worship God in a little round hut just outside. There Mr. Hepburn met with them, and prayed and talked with them.

One day Morembi and a number of his young men came to the waggon. For hours they went on angrily asking questions of Mr. Hepburn. At last Morembi stood up with his back against a tree and made a speech. He needed no one to teach him, he said; his young people should perform the heathen ceremonies, and they should not worship the white men’s God. The missionaries had taught him. He knew the Bible from end to end, but it was no good. He would not listen to what God said, and whatever God said or did, nothing should prevent him from killing his enemies for ever.

Mr. Hepburn waited until he had done. ‘Morembi,’ he said, ‘God is too great for what you say to prevent Him doing as He wills. God punishes the wicked every

day. You all know warriors and chiefs whom He has punished. You all reckoned Sekhome a great man, a great warrior, one wiser than all men in the use of charms and medicines. But God has made him an outcast. Morembi, God can do the same with you. He can take away all your power, and make you a lonely wanderer, without home, or wife, or child, or servant. This is God's power. What is your power against God's ?'

Before it was light the next morning, Mr. Hepburn heard the shout of the crier loud and shrill, calling the people to a great meeting, that they might discuss all together what was to be done.

All day long the meeting and the talk went on, and at four o'clock in the afternoon a messenger was sent to bring Mr. Hepburn to the *khotla*.

He went first into the waggon and brought out an old Bible. It was bound in morocco, and was gilt-edged ; it had been bright and beautiful once. You know it. It was the Bible which in years gone by Morembi used to read, and which Mr. Hepburn had now brought back for him.

The missionary went with the messengers to the *khotla*. The chief was sitting alone in the centre, and a seat was placed for Mr. Hepburn among some of the headmen in front of him. When Mr. Hepburn had taken his seat, Morembi called to the people around to come near and hear the words of the teacher. They came, making a complete circle round ; and as they approached and squatted down, it was easy to see the whips, made from thongs of buffalo hides, which they were hiding under their karosses.

'Tell him the people are here, to hear what he has to say.'

The chief did not speak to Mr. Hepburn, but to one of his headmen, who passed the words on to the missionary.

Mr. Hepburn rose, with the Bible in his hand, to speak and plead with Morembi and his people.

‘Was it ever heard,’ he said, ‘that a man to whom a powerful charm was given, threw it away as useless? Morembi sent for me to help him build his town. I came, and I brought with me something stronger and more powerful than any charm. It was not a charm to wear round the neck. The words of God which I brought are bright and beautiful, but they can be worn only in the heart. Where are those bright and beautiful words I brought to Morembi? They are not in his heart; he has despised them, and thrown them away. I gave to Morembi a book in which the words were written. Where is the Bible which I gave to him, which he learned to read, and says he knew from end to end?’

‘The Matabele have destroyed it,’ was the answer.

‘Yes; the Matabele came and fought with you. But Morembi had before that given up the Word of God. He had left off praying to God before the Matabele came the first time; he has told me so. He put a heathen charm into his rifle, and fired his first shot with that.

‘And your enemies destroyed you. Your houses were burned; your sheep, and your goats, and your cattle were taken; and your books, too, were taken and destroyed.

‘But one book was not destroyed. God put it into the hands of a Matabele warrior, and said, “Take that book to your master.” The book became dry in the hands of the warrior; at night he covered it with his shield, and laid his spear beside it.

‘Again I ask, where is this Bible which I gave to Morembi?’

‘I do not know,’ answered Morembi.

‘Then I will tell you, if you will listen, Morembi.

The warrior took the book to his king, Lobengula. Lobengula said, "It is a charm in which Morembi trusts," and he laughed and despised it. He did not know that Morembi himself despised it, and had fired upon the Matabele with a charm powerless to protect. But God said to the warrior, "Take the book to the white teachers at Inyati;" and to those teachers he said, "Send it by the swift runners to the teachers at Shoshong." So it came to me, and God bade me bring it back to you, Morembi. Here it is, and your name written in your own hand twice—"Morembi, chief." Here it is, see.

Morembi looked, he knew the book. His eyes flashed.

'See,' said Mr. Hepburn to the people. 'Morembi cast away this book; but God saw it. Morembi has forsaken God, but God has not forsaken Morembi. Here, in this *khotla*, by his heathen customs, Morembi has despised God's Word. Here, in this *khotla*, God, by my hand, lays His Word at the feet of Morembi, in the presence of his people. My hand is as God's hand, and my mouth as God's mouth to Morembi this day.

'Will you take up God's Word, Morembi, or will you let it lie? What will you do? The people are witness.'

For a moment or two Morembi gazed at the missionary as though he were frightened; then, springing up from his seat, he ran away towards the cattle-kraal.

But suddenly he turned and came back, flinging about his arms, and shouting. He wanted the people to attack the missionary with their whips; but they were amazed and thoughtful, they would not stir.

Then he tried himself to attack Mr. Hepburn, but one of his headmen came between, and kept back the angry chief.

'Am I not chief?' he shouted. 'Am I not chief?' And again he tried to urge the people to whip the missionary.

They closed around him ; there was a great tumult. But as with Jesus of old, so this servant of Christ's passed through the midst of the people, and went away.

As soon as Morembi saw the missionary was gone, he followed him with wild shrieks and yells, and ordered him at once to leave the country.

Mr. Hepburn prepared at once to leave, but the headmen asked him to stay over Sunday, and this he did.

On that Sunday the missionary joined the Christians again in their little round hut. There together, in remembrance of Jesus, they ate the bread and drank the wine together. 'We are alone, like Lot in Sodom,' they said ; and sad and fearful indeed they must have felt. But Jesus was with them, and was saying to them, 'Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.'

Early on the Monday morning there was another gathering in that little round hut. Mr. Hepburn handed over to the Christians all the books, and slates, and pencils, and paper he had in his waggon.

'Use them for Christ,' he said to the sorrowing Christians who had come to take leave of him. 'Use them for Christ, for they are His.'

'But how can we teach our children?' they asked. 'How can we save them from Morembi and the heathen customs? We will do our best, but how can we save them?'

Morembi could not keep away from the hut that morning. He first stood outside and listened ; then he came in and sat down silently on the ground. But Mr. Hepburn said no more to him.

Many of the Christians went with the missionary till the waggon had crossed the first river ; and then with tears they parted from him, and went back to the heathen town in which their lot was cast.



CHAPTER XXXI.

KHAMA'S CITY.

AND now we are coming to the end of our little book. All the stories in it are true, and have been written down by the missionaries of Bechuanaland. But before we bring the book to a close, you must hear a little about Khama's city. 'That is Shoshong,' you say; 'we have heard a great deal about that town.'

Shoshong has been burned down, the town is destroyed, no Bamangwato are living there now. This was done by Khama's orders.

Khama and his Christian headmen had been feeling for a long time that Shoshong was not a good enough town for Christian people; there was not enough water to drink, and certainly there was not enough water to make the town a clean and healthy place for so many men, women, and children. There were as many as thirty thousand people altogether.

But what was to be done? The cruel Matabele were in front, who could not be trusted, and might some day come and attack them again; and there were the mountains around and behind, in which they could hide, should Lobengula's savage warriors march against them once more. Was it safe to move? For a long time it

seemed as though it would be safer to stay at Shoshong, even though the people were so short of water.

But at last the day came when Khama thought that he and his people might safely move. He took great pains to find a part of the country which was pleasant and healthy. The piece of land he chose was seventy miles nearer to Matabeleland than Shoshong. It was large and open, with plenty of grass for cattle; with plenty of land fit for growing corn, and fruit, and vegetables; with plenty of large trees, and with plenty of running streams. Here Khama and his headmen prepared to plan and lay out the city.

The town was planned and arranged before the people moved. Broad avenues were to be left open, leading up to the immense *khotla*, and every man was to have a plot of ground on which to build his new house. Then there were the missionaries' houses, and chapels, and schools, and stores, all to be thought about.

The new homes are neat little cottages, well built of red clay, and thatched, each one standing in its own plot of garden ground. And there, under the shade of the immense trees, where the birds twitter and sing overhead, when lessons are done, the children play, or join the merry birds in singing. But the children sing joyful words, which they have learned at school, about Jesus; in this the birds cannot join them. If the chief passes by, the children are not afraid; he is kind and loving, and smiles to see them happy and good. His son, Sekgoma, helps to teach them at school, and Mabese was a kind friend to their mothers. The new city is called Palapye.

To all places in this world, however, sorrow and death come; and one of the first graves made at Palapye was the grave of Mabese. She was soon called away from

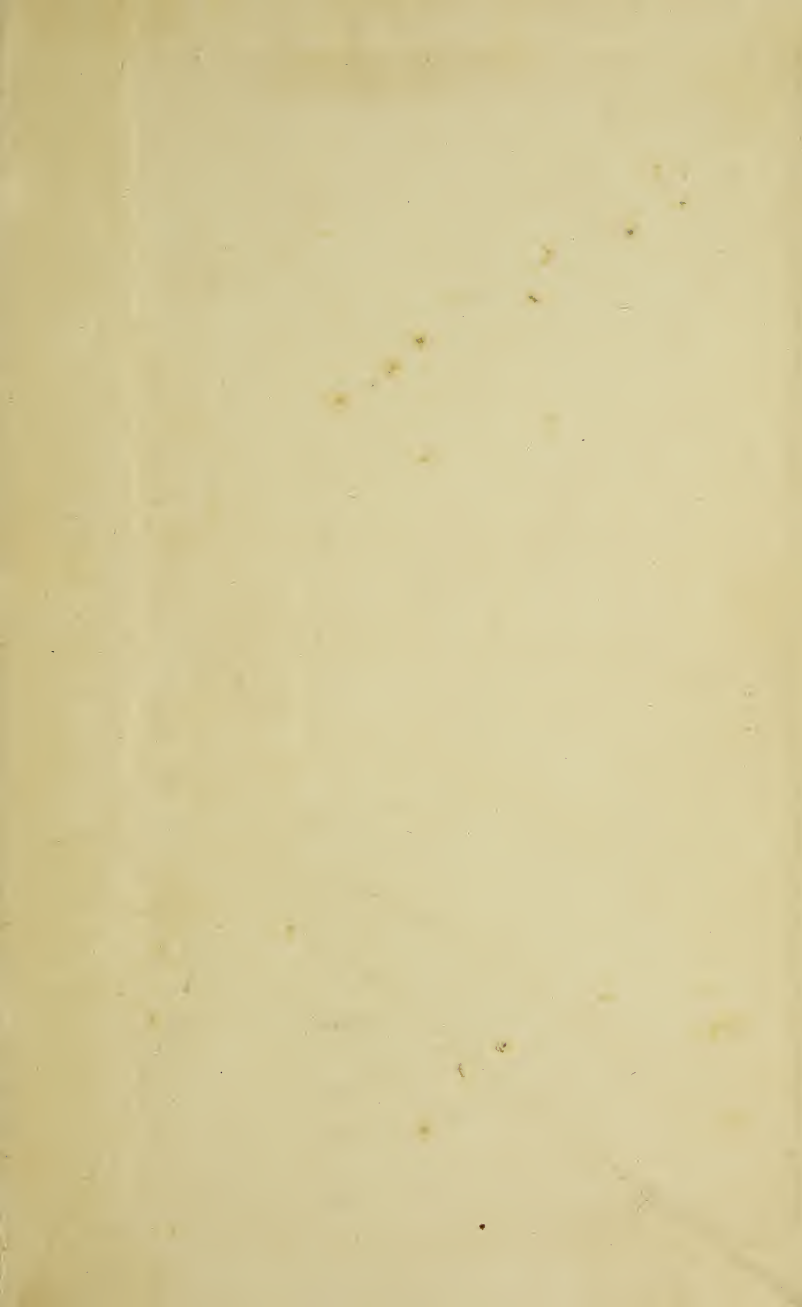
her new home to God's own city, 'Jerusalem the golden.' Khama mourned his faithful, loving wife truly. He has since married a daughter-in-law of Sechele, who was a widow; she, too, is a good and Christian woman.

So Khama is living his earnest, busy life on earth still; going quietly in and out among his people, and working for their good constantly. But his heart aims straight heavenwards; his joy, his hope, his true home is with Jesus there.

And now we have travelled all the way from Africaner's kraal to Khama's city, and we have visited many towns and seen many people on our way. Still the light streams out from Kuruman, and the glad news of God's love and Christ's salvation is still carried from there to all the country round.

And now Khama's city is like 'a city set on an hill, which cannot be hid.' It speaks to all of us plainly, and tells what a wonderful change is made in and through men, when they open their hearts to Jesus, and He enters in and dwells with them.

THE END.





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